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The Last Thirty Days of
Christ

SADAKICHI HARTMANN

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To AILEEN PRINGLE
In Appreciation and Friendship

THE DIARY OF LEBBEUS

A trustworthy Narrative of the last Lecturing Campaign of the Great Prophet, telling of his Journey through Galilee, Samaria, and East of Jordan, previous to his untimely Death at Emmaus, three days after the Crucifixion.

INTRODUCTION

DURING my Munich student days I enjoyed for a short while the hospitality of a distant relative of mine, a professor of philology. Herr Professor Heinrich Sorgenloch had one of those scrupulously exact and analytical minds, as are granted exclusively to German professors, a veritable storehouse of data and futile speculations, dry and well camphored as the showcases of an entomology department. He was a recognized scholar of Coptic and Chaldean, of Hebrew and Samaritan, and all the Canaanite languages. Subsidized by one of my uncles he had spent ten years in Palestine to write—the muses forbid—a twelve volume history of Commerce of the town of Tiberias under the Roman Empire.

Although the soup in the professor's household ladled out thinly and the slices of meat were frail as wafers, I liked the companionship of the sniveling shortsighted old gentleman and appreciated his learning. We discussed together such delicate themes as the peculiarity of the word "else" in Anglo-Saxon, the absolute isolation of the Bask dialect showing no trace of "root" relations, and the importance of universally employed interjections as "ha ha" or imitative utterances of children as "baa baa" in the origin and development of languages, all matters of

INTRODUCTION

keen interest to an onomatopoetic mind. The old gentleman professed to be very fond of me, and when he died, he actually bequeathed to me—he had not much else to leave but his funeral expenses—a manuscript labeled “The Diary of Lebbeus.”

The manuscript was not one of those neatly rolled-up and ribbon-tied calligraphic triumphs, as come down to us from the hands of poets. Its appearance was of a shocking, demoralizing character. Scribbled down hastily, with endless corrections, some passages in pencil, on sheets unnumbered and of uneven sizes, spotted throughout liberally with coffee rings, grease spots and fly dirt, nibbled at the corners by mice so that here and there a word had lost its vowel, the manuscript did not inspire me to quick action. Besides it was a word for word translation from—I do not know whether from Hebrew, Greek, or Aramaic—into German, and the diction consequently was hopelessly awkward and unliterary. Having never seen the original manuscript, and being ignorant whether it was found in the dusty cell of some ruined monastery or whether the monks of Athos used it once upon a time as a seat, as they are reported to have done with other priceless volumes, I can not vouch for the authenticity of the diary.

Still the contents seemed to me to possess a sufficient amount of observation and imagination as well as local color and descriptive charm to warrant an adaptation into English. It im-

INTRODUCTION

pressed me as being a sort of prototype to Strauss and Renan, treating Christ as a man, subject to human ailments and shortcomings, and as a great preacher, indefatigable and indomitable like John Wesley who must have preached day and night to have fifty thousand discourses to his credit. All this happened quite a number of years ago. I have never cultivated the habit of rushing into print, and surely would not do so with a priceless document like this one. If it be genuine, well, then it should have been published centuries ago, and its date of publication now, a few years earlier or later would mean but little to its ultimate significance. And if not genuine, but the invention of a modern brain, not necessarily an imposition, forgery or collusion, its fate will be like all other books of fiction. It will make its appearance, either to live or die, on the strength of its imaginative qualities.

For the prelude which I could not refrain from introducing, I beg indulgence from my readers. It is meant for nothing else but a *Vorspiel* to the following events. It is written in the spirit of the diary, with the same realism, humor and occasional moods of irreverence, which if known to christology at the time of Meletius might have changed history and given to the twenty-eighth of October a different saint's name than that of Lebbeus.

SADAKICHI HARTMANN,
Farallone, Cal., 1917.

PRELUDE

THE lake of Galilee lay like a precious stone of peacock blue in a setting of purplish sand and the dark green vegetation of wild rocky heights. Its placid surface was streaked only here and there with long stripes of mauve, and there was a sheen of silvery white far away on the horizon. On the eastern sky rose a vague wall of blue mist—or was it the opposite shore! and grey formations of vapor dragged along the sky obscuring the sun and showing the sky only in disconnected patches of cerulean blue. Gusts of wind, a cool wholesome breeze, occasionally startled up the ultramarine surface into glittering foamcaps, but they disappeared as quickly as they came and only at the very edge of the shoreline gathered sufficient strength to roll over and stir up the brown mud.

The shore was dotted with black boats shoved high upon the pebbly sand, which with their masts and flapping main sails, resembled large lettering set up in a landscape. On the stern of one of the boats with his legs dangling over sat an old whitebearded man, chewing a piece of aloe. A sturdy middle aged fellow clad only in short trousers, who had just hung up the last

P R E L U D E

net to dry on willow poles, approached the old man and leaning against the bulging form of the boat opposite addressed him.

"Well, father, I fear that's the last time I cleaned the nets—for a while at least."

"We can get along without you, Thad, no fear," grumbled the old man, "I surely do not want to be in your way. You are old enough to choose for yourself. Still, I hold my opinion, it is not exactly wise to give up a comfortable livelihood for something so precarious as is your choice."

"I surely do not take it up for any gain," answered Lebbeus, also called Thaddeus, toying with the row-lock. "There is not so much in fishing either, here at Capernaum," and he glanced about smilingly. "You are aware, father, that Jesus does not charge for his services."

"But how do you know that you have the power to heal? Furthermore, would he not be foolish to give away his secrets to the firstcomer? None of his disciples have become known as healers."

"Their time no doubt has not come. You know it is not so much that I want to become a healer and miracle worker. I want to be with him. I know I will enjoy it and profit in many ways. I want to see how he manages to hold these big crowds. They flock to hear him by the thousands."

"There are not as many as that around here. Given in that he is a powerful speaker, how do

PRELUDE

you know that you have any gift for it? Jesus, why I remember him; he sometimes came out here with his father, Joseph, the woodcarver who did some figure heads for us. He was a slick worker too. Was Jesus not a kind of wonder child, did he not preach as a twelve year old boy in the temple at Jerusalem and caused a sensation? And he has done nothing else since. No wonder he can talk! Well, son, are you sure at least that he wants you?"

"I met James, last night at the Zebedees; he assured me that he is glad to have anybody who is willing to come. You can come and go as you please."

"A wise way to keep up a retinue of free labor," the old man spat and chuckled. Then a scowl of doubt or displeasure seemed to pass over his forehead.

The young man noticed it. "What is on your mind, father?"

"There is one thing I do not like about your going. You see what Herod has done with John the Baptist. These are bad times for prophets. You do not know what might happen in the next few weeks. He is going to Jerusalem and he is hated there."

"You think he might come to harm—with all his following?"

"Do you really think they care for him? A few, yes. The crowd, they go out of curiosity, they want to hear him, to see him, that is all. What is the use of all this talking anyway? It

PRELUDE

does nobody any good. Only gets one into trouble if one takes it too seriously. Is it not bad enough that we have to support all these synagogues? What earthly good do they do!"

"Father, he does not approve of them as they are conducted now."

"No, of course not. He may have the best of ideas and bring about a temporary change. Will that make his disciples any better than the scribes and rabbis now, not to speak of the Pharisees?" and the old man spat vigorously. "Do not forget, we are all human, and the crowd does not care. They want to be guided merely to feel no responsibility."

"Jesus is different."

"Why, Thad, you are still a child. You surely do not believe in all those miracles! Agreed, that he knows more than the ordinary bonesetter and herb doctor hereabouts. Naturally he learnt something in Egypt and all the out-of-the-way places. They say he has been in India. He heals as many as he can, and as he knows better methods, he heals more than others. That is all there is to it."

"How about his immediate cures?"

"You can rest assured that they were not seriously sick. They got frightened and imagined something. He makes his patients get up and gives them some simple remedy, a wet rag for those who have headache or a sore throat; a dose of oil for those who are slow of bowels and a hot bath to those who are sluggish of limb."

P R E L U D E

“Has he not made lame men work!”

“Also our bonesetters have done so. He has a more scientific method of handstrokes over the body, of rubbing, kneading, pounding and no doubt achieves at times astonishing results. And as for the story of changing water into wine. How can people be so credulous. The bridegroom at Cana happened to have no wine or his guests had drunk it all by the time Jesus arrived, for one can hardly imagine that a man invites friends to a feast of this kind, happening only once or twice in a lifetime, without being provided in some way. Given in that he had no wine, well, Jesus brought some with him, and consequently was much made of. Imagine they were just ready to drink water, the host felt worried, and then his surprise when he took up the water pot and tasted wine, not knowing from where it came. So they laughed and said he changed our water into wine, which assuredly he did. People naturally talked about, exaggerated it, each one adding something of his own wit to the happenings, and so finally the story went abroad that he had performed a miracle.”

“That is one way of explanation, not necessarily mine. There can not be so much fuss about nothing. Furthermore, the miraculous draught of fishes, it even converted James and John, how do you account for that?”

“Luck, my boy, nothing but luck. You know yourself, sometimes they run this way and other times they run that way. We have had miracu-

PRELUDE

lous light catches, too many alas, this morning for instance; and then again nights when they worked our strip of the bay to madness so that they rocked the keels of the boats, and afterwards lay waistdeep right here on the strand. And so it came to pass——”

At that moment a procession of men appeared in the bend of the road. Two men, one in blue, the other in red, preceded. Next came all alone a stately white figure with long black hair and beard, his robe blowing freely about his figure. After him followed a second division of about fifty or sixty in two columns three and four abreast. A few walked with staves or carried sticks, others all manner of burdens as baskets, wine jugs, kneading troughs, leather water sacks, bags and bales, on their heads, in their hands, slung over their shoulders, or carried by two on poles, and the rear was brought up by a motley throng of men, women and children, filling the entire road.

“That’s him!” shouted Lebbeus, for sheer joy jumping high into the air. In great excitement he seized his cloak and a *bell* net, waved a hasty farewell to his father, who had turned his head without shifting his position, and ran off whirling the net around his head to meet the men in blue and red, James and John, the general managers of the lecturing campaign.

“Do not forget, you are always welcome home, Tad,” called the old man after him, shoving a new piece of aloe into his mouth. “No prodigal muchado about it either!”

THE DIARY OF LEBBEUS

*During the Seventh Year of Emperor Nero's
Reign*

MY NAME is Lebbeus, also known as Thaddeus, of no particular parentage, just the son of an ordinary six boat fisherman on the lake of Galilee. I was born in Capernaum and grew up in the lake region. I was apprenticed for several years to Zebedee on the inflow of the Jordan and worked in the boat of James, one of the disciples of Jesus of Nazareth. I am now living in the town of Tiberias, not doing much of anything. I have constant pains in the arms and legs and although I cured many of the same ailments, can not cure my own. It is now more than thirty years hence since my short association with the Master. But the events are as vivid in my memory as if they had happened yesterday. They are as burnt into my memory. They were the most wonderful days of my life and hardly a day passes that I do not find myself in deep meditation over some of the occurrences. Some months ago I came across the notes that I had jotted down during that eventful journey, and it occurred to me that it would not only be a great joy to get them into reading shape and to relive the olden days, but that my experience

THE DIARY OF LEBBEUS

might interest others who share my adoration of the Master.

This I have accomplished—the manuscript lies here on the table with a nail from the crucifixion as paperweight. I am too well aware that I am not a talented chronicler like John, who always carried a notebook of small parchment sheets about him, scribbling at all times, during lectures, while walking on the road, even at meals, and who is now—if hearsay can be trusted—writing a life of the Saviour somewhere in far Ephesus. Also Mattheus is writing, and so is his brother. Phillip is writing too. Andrew is writing. They are all writing. Notwithstanding I have faithfully endeavored to set forth my impressions as I originally received them, young in thought as I was, and not with my eyesight of today that has grown a trifle dim by a too zealous analysis of events. My vocabulary and general knowledge no doubt have increased and I can just as well state as not, that the discussion of parables and Christ's humor as well as casual philosophical remarks are of a more recent date.

When I joined the Master I was thirty-two years old and knew but little of the world except what I had learnt during a two years' stay in Tiberias. My first ambition was to become a follower of Aesculap, not for any disdain for my father's profession; I always liked wet, creeping things, the touch of spray on naked legs and chest, and the riot of wind and water. Still I

THE DIARY OF LEBBEUS

wanted to do something else with my life than catching things that other men eat. My kinsfolk's reduced circumstances prevented me from going to Alexandria. So, I helped my father, fished and dreamt, feeling at times a vague desire to become a preacher, or at least a reader at some synagogue.

When I heard the Master preach at Capernaum, the desire became irresistible. For a year or two more, I hauled in my nets rather languidly causing my father to make many an angry reproof, but when Jesus came again—alas, on his last journey—I left trailers and nets and went with him. There my report begins, to end with his actual death three days after the crucifixion.

At that time I did not comprehend the full meaning of his teachings. Who ever did! I still looked at it too much from the viewpoint of speech-making. Little did I anticipate then that his doctrines would spread all over the West, or rather be actually adhered to. Why there are little associations everywhere. It is almost like a new religion. Even where I go every Sabbath evening to drink a jug of wine, to throw dice and discuss timely topics, we all believe in living close to our fellow men, in the futility of riches and power, and in another life to come. Alas, the world has grown so suspicious of this in itself so harmless belief, that we have to keep our thoughts in secret. Poor James was killed with the sword. Bartholomew shared a similar fate in India. The Jews hate us, the Buddhists hate

THE DIARY OF LEBBEUS

us, and the Romans hate us. Emperor Nero has nursed a fiendish antipathy against the so called Christians, and has ordered to persecute them wherever they assert themselves in public. So I may after all, not publish this little manuscript. Not that I am a coward and not true to my convictions, but I think it hardly to be of sufficient import to be the cause of any public perturbation.

After the Master's death, like so many of us, I did not know what to do. We had gone through too much that was grand and horrible to be able to endure mere human moderation. Was I ordained to follow in his footsteps! Was I chosen to shepherd wandering souls! Would the mob not laugh at me, and in my case righteously? I went back wearily plying a fisherman's trade until my father died. Then I gave up the business and the spirit moved me once more.

I went to Persia to preach and baptize. But so many Jews had emigrated to Persia, who mocked at this new belief, that it was difficult to convert any natives. After a few years of futile endeavor, many hardships and humiliations, I returned to the lake region, grateful that I had escaped martyrdom, for as little as a man might hold himself in esteem, it is hardly reasonable to endure the death of a martyr without having accomplished anything. With Peter in Rome, that is a different matter, but I do not come from such high a lineage.

I fear I was not born to be a martyr. Either I lack devotion to the cause, or I have insuffi-

FIRST DAY

cient belief in humanity. As long as people have the crude nature they have, they will not do right and can not be compelled to do so. It seems to me to be a slow growth that can be forced in no manner, even if a legion of disciples worked with constant zeal for a thousand years. There can never be one kind of salvation for all. It refuses to be brought about, yea, even by a world prophet like the Master, who was not only a sweet comrade, a great sage and brave teacher, but the most powerful exponent of the spoken word that ever lived.

FIRST DAY

WHEN I saw Jesus of Nazareth approaching I straightway seized coat and net, and ran to meet him as fast as my legs would carry me, almost colliding in my enthusiasm with James who held me at armlength, laughing heartily, "Verily, an ardent disciple." Then he introduced me to the Master without any ceremony of handshaking and beard kissing. The Master scrutinized me—I shall never forget that glance through halfclosed eyes, like some strange light breaking through dark water. He nodded and motioned with his head backwards "Join the rest and follow me!" Turning to Peter he remarked smilingly "Am I so wrong in calling Capernaum my native city? Those little boat talks of mine on the lake have turned quite a number of net-haulers into real fishers of men, have they not?"

FIRST DAY

I fell back and we marched along. It was a weird crowd that surrounded me. There were men from Decapolis, from Trachonitis and Abilene, from Phoenicia and Syria, from Judea and Jerusalem. They represented all possible shades of skin color from pale olive to dark brown, even to an Ethiopian son of the desert with a regular turban, our cook when provisions permitted the exercise of such an occupation.

Many of them went barefoot, and apparently claimed no earthly possessions except those they had on their backs. Some lacked trowsers and others shirts. An old clothes dealer in Jerusalem would not have given more than a silver piece for the whole outfit. A young Egyptian boy in gay colors and tinsel tights, lithe like a young girl, a juggler by profession, joined me by linking his arm into mine and volunteered information.

"They are not all disciples?" I asked.

"Not on your life; the favorite ones, right before us, you will soon get to know. That old chap with a nightcap on and all bundled up like a mummy is Bartholomew. The clean shaven fellow with the clasps and buckles is Phillip. And that tall fellow with the battered silver trumpet on his hip is Doubting Thomas, 'Uncle Gabriel' we call him. The other fifty or sixty hobbling behind us are the minor disciples. The rest are loafing swains and maidens. They just follow us from one meeting place to another and then slouch home again. We have just finished

FIRST DAY

a tour through Syria and along the coast of Sidon and Tyre, and the following has steadily increased. Everywhere they turned out by thousands, to listen and to bring out their sick to him."

Having lived most of my life as the captain of a fishing crew where one man has to do this and another that, I wondered how all these men were fed, for there seemed to be hardly enough provisions within the limited baggage they carried.

"It is very much like a traveling circus, only simpler," explained my young friend with a twinkle of mirth in his liquid brown eyes. "The Master tells us to take no thought for our life, what we shall eat, wherewithall we shall clothe ourselves, 'as the morrow,' so he says, 'will take care of the morrow. Ye will be clothed and you will sit down to meat. For ask,' so he says, 'and it shall be given you, seek and ye shall find, knock and doors will be opened unto you.' The rules are not to go from house to house, but make friends with somebody, say 'peace be to your house,' do them a service, clean the cistern or mend the fence, speak about the Master and be satisfied to eat and drink such things as they serve you and take what they give. Each man forages the best he can and contributes for the general welfare. It works fairly well as you will see. We always take supper together, and the rest of the day we shift for ourselves. Of course, it is a hard pinch at times, but we generally man-

FIRST DAY

age to get one square meal a day. And then sometimes we are invited quite unexpectedly by some rich sympathiser."

I listened to all this absentmindedly. I was fascinated by the looks of the Master, his long swinging stride as if he would never tire. He was unusually tall and of muscular build, not muscles acquired by toil, just well developed and well proportioned, his skin light brown like old ivory, smooth without any hair on the chest or arms. He wore a white gown long and wide, picturesquely gathered up at the hips with a red belt of goat's leather, so that it would not trail in the dust of the road. The sleeves were full and the garment open at the chest. His black beard was trimmed but his hair held with a band around his forehead was allowed to fall in long unruly curls upon his shoulders. The sun shone through the white garment revealing glimpses of his sturdy legs, and a highlight of flickering gold appearing on the thigh at every step, gave to his walk a radiance as of liquid fire and flame.

"When does the Master speak?" I queried.

"Generally before supper time, when we can make a big town or village, but really he is ready whenever there is a crowd or he is asked to perform, sometimes half a dozen times during a day."

Two disciples generally went in advance to select the most suitable localities for the sermon and the camp, and also to announce his coming. The latter, I soon learnt, was really unnecessary

FIRST DAY

as his mere appearance in a place drew a crowd. They seemed to emerge in droves from every nook and corner. It is difficult to say where they all came from, even in the smallest hamlets. It seems as if they grew out of the ground.

Apparently untiring we plodded along the road. On one side hills with olive and mulberry trees, here and there a farm, on the other side meadowland with grazing cattle and beyond it the dark blue waters of Lake Galilee. Some disciples fell behind to pick berries in large earthen jars. We arrived at Magdala, a fishing village, sometime before sunset, and proceeded to the meeting place. The Master generally fancies the slope of a hill, so that he can be seen by all and talk down to them.

Doubting Thomas, with a firm grasp on his trumpet, watched the Master until he nodded. Then, Doubting Thomas put the instrument to his puckered lips and sent forth a few blasts, more terrific than musical, just some signal as marching armies use. Some of the disciples would usher early comers to a proper distance from the spot where the Master expected to stand, and group them in a sort of half circle, while the Egyptian would cast aside his mantle and do some juggling with eggs and metal balls, followed up by some balancing stunts and finally by some weird acts of contortions such as were the fashion ever since the daughter of Herod had taken up this art as a pastime. The Master in the meanwhile would sit on a rock, wiggling

FIRST DAY

his left foot and gazing absentmindedly at the crowd. Then suddenly he would rise and begin to speak.

There was a big sympathetic crowd that night and he spoke at great length and with beautiful sustained fervor. I paid little attention to the meaning of the words. I only heard his voice, even, sonorous, like the beat of the tide against the shore, coming from lips whose curves and rich color haunted me for days.

And as the crowd dispersed, we proceeded to the nearby camp. Several wood fires were burning and shadowy figures moved about. The frugal repast was ready, consisting of broiled fish, bread and wine. Large seashells which did the double service of cup and plate, were all the table utensils we had. Knives and fingers had to do the rest. And the only other luxury were wet pieces of cloth, handed around after dinner by the swarthy Arab, to wipe our hands clean.

The Master said a cheerful "Come and dine" and squatted down at the head of a large oblong canvas cloth spread on the ground, and half a dozen or more of his favorite disciples sat with him. We others accommodated ourselves in various groups. I was as if intoxicated and hardly ate. I felt radiantly happy and completely exhausted from all I had seen and experienced, from the strangeness of it all, from the remoteness from everything ever known to me before.

I soon looked for a sheltered place and

SECOND DAY

stretched myself out on my back in the sand and looked at the stars. Thousands of them, large and small, each shining with a different lustre, each in his place. Why do they stud the dark blue in this opulent fashion, apparently useless like the doings of men upon this earth! Still they mind their own business, content with appearing and disappearing and swimming in space. Do they serve the universe to some mysterious purpose? What mathematical laws, what philosophy of numerals, what juicy force of life controls their existence? Perchance their sizes and colors are related to sounds in a harmony of the spheres. No matter what, they cool the mind and fill our emotions with spacial bigness. Would that the lives of men were so regulated, to shine so calmly through the centuries. If such a task could be accomplished, it would be through the doctrine of the Master. (I did not think of all this at the time, it represents rather what I should have thought.)

SECOND DAY

WE rose early, the grass was still wet as we crossed some fields on the road to Tiberias. For breakfast, the bread left over from the evening meal and a drink from the first well we passed, had to suffice. The red brown hills with their rain washed gullies retired in a kind of arch and the smell of reeds and rushes was on the air. Still on that morning my senses, so alive to the

SECOND DAY

intimacies of nature, were more keenly occupied by the various "favorite" disciples, whose rank, if I was found worthy, I hoped to join.

Peter, short and fat, with green protruding eyes, not unlike those of a frog, clad in a frayed weatherworn coat, easily made himself most conspicuous. He frequently joined the Master, ever ready to ask questions, to make remarks and raise objections. He had something of a bull about him, fierce, stubborn, easily roused, but devoted to the Master like no other. It was touching to see him, with his arms folded on his back and his head turned upwards, trying to look at the Master and to keep pace with him at the same time. Although acting rather roughly to us others, he was kind at heart. His position was that of a self chosen bodyguard of the Master, and on our daily marches a sort of leader of the second division. His brother Andrew, thickset, gnarled like an old tree-trunk, and with a short curly grey beard, looked out for the food supply. Without his system of foraging acquired during an apprenticeship under John the Baptist, asking now these to do this and then others to take care of something else, we undoubtedly would have gone hungry more frequently than we did.

Simon the Canaanite and flamboyant Judas Iscariot, a strangely magnetic personality, generally travelled a day ahead as advance messengers to prepare the way. So we saw little of them.

SECOND DAY

Sturdy, straightforward James and sad and headachy looking John, although clad in rags, betrayed in the condescension of their manners that they had belonged to the socially privileged and that their family kept servants. This pair of brothers took care of the general management, arranged details, and interviewed inquisitive people for the Master. John was decidedly the youngest, most handsome and learned of us. He was self absorbed and apparently interested only in the Master's sayings which he never failed to jot down as soon as they were uttered.

Doubting Thomas, a lean elderly crabapple sort of a man, with occasional sparks of a smouldering fire in his eyes, avoided everybody. He just did his own thinking and trumpeting. He had criticised the Lazarus incident as being a "bolstered up" affair, and the other disciples had guyed him so mercilessly about his disbelief that he had grown silent. Nobody could induce him to enter an argument.

Then there was Phillip, the best arrayed, who in his tweed linen with cunning needlework looked more like a rich man's son on a walk outside the city walls than a religious devotee bent on a serious mission. Still, it was he who stood with the Baptist waistdeep in the Jordan dipping virgins and old men backwards into the eddying waters. He was what one might call a scholarly vagrant, the tramp who dreams.

The last three were old "muffled up" Bartholomew, of whose face at no time one could see more

SECOND DAY

than a sniveling nose, James the son of Alpheus and Mary, a rag-and-bone man with an unusually large forehead over a grimy, weazened face, of a personality so evasive that one hardly noticed him, entirely unlike to his corpulent self-possessed brother Mattheus, garbed in honest brown, formerly a custom officer, practical, shrewd, determined that something great must be the outcome of all this personal discomfort and marching about. It was he who had walked straight out of his publican office to follow the Master, not caring what became of the documents or business of the day, but deeply concerned to arrange a farewell feast at his parents' home the same evening.

During the run of the afternoon Andrew invited me to fish with him, as the Master was exceedingly fond of slices of fried sole and broiled carp. I cheerfully joined the expedition as it was now for something else than mere gain. We were wonderfully successful, but getting the big load into town was a different matter and the Master had already returned from the synagogue when we arrived, so I did not hear him that day.

After supper we dispersed to see the sights about town. The Master had no objections to late hours. What we did or left undone, that was every man's own affair. "As long as the bridegroom is among ye, why should ye not feast and rejoice?" However, I do not think there was overmuch rejoicing as most of the comrades

SECOND DAY

had no coin. I had a few silver pieces in a bag tied like a garter around my knee which was really against the rule as we were suffered to travel on agreed terms and not hold any advantage whatever over the others. One often can buy what one can not get in any other way. If we had caught no fish, would I not have purchased some?

Tiberias under Herod was a gay town; it had its chariot races and athletic games, theatres and baths, columned promenades and free military concerts, like a real Roman city. Whereas its quarter of wine gardens, gambling houses, dance halls and of doubtful resorts, labeled "Silver Sandals," "Jasmine in the Hair" or plain "Rebecca" or "Ruth," was as well lit, crowded and noisome as that of Jerusalem. Gay jades, wrapped in odorous clouds of perfume, jostled me laughingly, throwing a pitiful glance at my poor costume.

I soon tired of the scene and returned to the camp. Groping my way through rocks and tree trunks, towards a shimmering light, a strange sight greeted my eye. There Jesus sat, with a red-haired woman lolling at his feet, a lantern between them. She seemed to talk most earnestly to him, while he was toying with a blade of grass in absentminded fashion. The light of the lantern shone bright on the Master's white robe but not on his face, and glimmered like light seen through wine on the woman's hair. Her figure was all dark and its outlines were

SECOND DAY

hidden by the profusion of her hair. I was told that the woman was Mary Magdalen who had run one of the most luxurious houses of ill repute in Tiberias where costly viands were served, where fountains flowed with wine and beautiful women from all parts of the world yielded their charms to generous paramours. According to report, after hearing Jesus preach, she had come to him, repentant, bathing his feet with her tears and drying them with her hair.

Why does he still bother with her! He has converted her. She has given up her trade and now has an academy for homeless young girls. Is that not enough? I had never thought of the Master's relation to women. It had never entered my mind. A pain like a sting of jealousy shot through me. Of course, I argued, she means nothing to him as a woman, or as a human being for that matter. People are all alike to him. He is kind to her as to everybody else. But she—at this very moment—as she stretches herself out before him, resting her elbows on the ground and her face on her palms, looking up to him, does she feel only adoration, no sex whatsoever? This very movement—does it not reflect emotion, or is it merely habitual, ■ reminiscence of her former life?

I rolled over on the ground out of the reach of the light so that I could not see them, and continued to argue. The Master is no woman's man, nor a young man's either. Why he makes the strongest impression on men that are a good

THIRD DAY

deal older than he. Why nearly all his favorites are older than he. And his strongest sympathisers, like Nicodemus the landowner, Joseph of Arimathea, Simon the Leper in Bethany, the centurion at Capernaum, are all beyond middle age. And his best woman friends, too, Mary at Jerusalem, is an elderly woman. He only seizes upon the mature mind or the mind that yearns to be developed. Youth means nothing to him. Children, yes. But not when they become wrapped up in the importance of their own selves. He prefers simple folks that are not spoiled, yet have an idea or two of their own.

The Master without sex—no! but with a sex power inversed into spirituality. Like a chest dropped to the bottom of a lake. It is there, but not easily hauled to the surface. Few can stand the strain of leading an ascetic life, they become lean and withered like Doubting Thomas. It needs a robust physical constitution to dam this torrent within oneself and lead it into the wider and calmer channels of good will towards all, hard on the surface but warm within.

THIRD DAY

On the way to Cana.

SEIZED an opportunity today to tell the Master how much I worshipped him, that I at least was convinced he was the great prophet of whom the other prophets have spoken. He answered "Your faith will guide you on the way to

THIRD DAY

righteousness, and your reward will come according to your work." "What can I ever do for you?" I questioned falteringly. "No man can tell what he may do for another." "Will you teach me how to preach, now and then give me a hint?" "Take no thought of what you shall speak, for you will know what to speak when the hour has come. For it is not you who speaks but the same spirit that makes me speak. And now, go and help to pick berries that we may not be in want for an evening meal."

As I talked to the Master, I was struck by the unusual large size of his nose, an unmistakable attribute, so I had been told, of visionaries and idealists. I felt my own and realized that I had no complaint to make. But it is the length from the upper lip to the tip of the nose, that is the thing, not any length or special formation of the ridge. Otherwise all Romans and most of us Jews could make the same claim.

The bridegroom at whose house the Master several years ago "had changed water into wine" came to the lecture and invited us to a late supper. He laughed as he ushered us into his neat little cottage with a cheerful "My lord, I am well provided this time, and sure enough the must of Cana's vineyards had all the ruby color, acidity and mirth provoking quality which is the soul of wine. The Master feasted with relish and rehearsed some new parables for our benefit. The Master likes to eat well and drink well, and consequently has been much criticised and called

THIRD DAY

a gluttonous man and a wine bibber, as such habits were not beseeming to a prophet. Well, the Master ate heartily whenever an opportunity offered itself, as a man who works so hard naturally would. Often there was little enough and then he did not grumble or complain. Nor did I ever see him refuse a hearty draught from a wine jug. He liked to sit down in pleasant company, in a friend's home, and listen to the conversation and now and then take a sip. Whereas he would never think of stopping at a roadhouse, or become familiar with the company simply because he was drinking with them.

The Pharisees say, why does he not keep fasts more regularly and wash his hands before eating? The life on the road does not permit it. Food is scarce at times. Why there have been many days in the lands of Zabulon and Naphthalin beyond the Jordan (so Andrew says) when they walked hungry through cornfields and plucked the ears, and opening them with their nails ate the kernels. A slow way to get filled. And after such a day one can not fast the next one. As for the unwashed hands—how can sixty to seventy men wash themselves when the water supply is low? Our goatskins most of the time are neither bulbous nor dripping. We sometimes have to walk for a furlong or more to get enough for soup, and hard work it is.

FOURTH DAY

FOURTH DAY

WE reached Nazareth at dusk, rather behind time; nothing seemed to go well this day. I was anxious to see the Manger, but it had been torn down, and the family had moved to other quarters, a little truckfarm on the outskirts of the town. We all thought that he would put up with his family for one night, howbeit he preferred to say unto us "Make camp, my sons," and that decided the matter.

On the way to the synagogue a large multitude swarmed the streets. His brothers and sisters with the mother came to greet him. He let them wait for a long time, then kissed his mother on her snow-white hair, talked a few commonplaces, thereupon turned away again. Peter wanted to know why he did not make more of them and introduce them to us. The Master stretched forth his hand in one of his mysterious sweeping gestures and said: "They do not mean more to me than anybody else, whosoever believes in me and follows me, is my brother and sister and mother." I realized that meetings of this kind must be unprofitable, as soon as one member of the family has outgrown the remainder, either in mind, character, even in wealth or position. Relatives do not make life easier.

The audience was large but distant. At Magdala it had been eager and sympathetic, in Tiberias curious and easygoing, here it was of the doubting and easily offended kind.

FIFTH DAY

As I was one of the ushers my ears caught many discourteous remarks, such as—"Is not this the carpenter's son who (when a boy) stole olives from my garden?—What great things can he have to tell us!—Do we not meet his sisters on the street, poor stuff they are!—And do not his brothers Hosea and Juda peddle greens on our stairs!—Where did he get all this knowledge from! How can anyway a great prophet come from Galilee.—And his mother, why she is simply impossible"—and they told all sorts of stories about her and Joseph and the Master's parentage. True the Master had spent his boyhood at Nazareth, was familiar with the place as only a boy can be, and he knew in the crowd many by sight as well as they knew him. This did not fail to exercise an unfavorable influence on his sermon, he did not warm up to the subject, talked rather falteringly with a cold, harsh voice, and there were no shouts of approval.

On the way campwards I saw him angry for the first time, his eyes flashed as he repeated unto Peter and James, "A man ought to know that a prophet is not without honor save in his own country. Long may they wait before I lecture here again."

FIFTH DAY

On the way to Mount Tabor.

THIS is a day off; the Master is preparing for one of his important speeches tomorrow. Thou-

FIFTH DAY

sands and thousands from the neighboring country are expected, as James sent couriers carrying the message in all directions. So we strolled along leisurely. A peaceful country crowded with settlements. Everywhere women were washing, baking, gossiping, and the ploughmen sang in the fields. It almost seemed as if these people were content, and in need of no special salvation.

But lo, there they came and stopped him and brought out their sick. Many of them were former patients in a state of convalescence.

If he is rightly approached, in humility, he always stops. If they touch the hem of his gown with their lips and murmur "Thou, son of David, have mercy on us" he is pleased, but he tolerates no doubt or money offers. He generally salutes them with a "Believe in me and the Spirit and ye will be cured." And then he gives them a treatment. The children run to him with bruised heads, cut fingers and stubbed toes, and his hands are as gentle as a woman's. He carries all sorts of salves and pellets and liniments in a pouch fastened to his undergarment.

Now a man growing blind claims his serious attention, then a man with palsy brings an anxious look to his face, a leper makes him issue orders for the preparation of a bath. He could not pass by a sick child. Anything hurt or helpless had a devoted friend in the Master. The story of the Samaritan he tells, is one of his own experiences. And then when he leaves, he

FIFTH DAY

murmurs as a farewell, "According to your faith be it unto you," and then he advises the rest of the family "not to speak of it."

How many cures the Master actually accomplished is difficult to say. Nothing immediate can be accomplished by passing through a village and single treatments. Of course the Master stays as long as he deems necessary, we resting in the meanwhile, taking a bath in a nearby stream or going on some foraging expedition. From the number he had cured, as he passed through these places before, every year in fact, the results were quite astonishing.

His great fame as a healer was due, no doubt, to the Lazarus miracle. In that case, there was a man in the state of acutest asphyxia, apparently dead to all sensations. The Master alone was doubtful, so he scraped away some skin on the forearm and saw that it turned red not brown. Thereupon he put a glass of wine on Lazarus' chest and watched it for hours. Finally his patience was rewarded, there was a slight trembling of the contents. Thereafter it was a matter of ordinary reviving processes. Such a cure is apt to blaze abroad to the remotest quarters, whereas cases of the actually cured give in time a truer foundation to reputation and skill. He now begins to reap the fruit of the pains he has taken.

The Master's healing power must be something beyond treatment and advice, perchance the manner in which he instils energy and self

SIXTH DAY

belief into the patient. For when he asks "Do ye believe that I am able to do so and so," and they answer "Yea, Lord," he endows them at that very moment with conviction, a certain healing power of its own. They believe him, they expect to improve, and nothing soothes and heals more effectively than faith in the possibility of being cured. The Master has endowed the rather doubtful gift of divination with a new force. And he is so enthusiastic about it that he at times abuses it. As, for instance, this afternoon when he—no doubt longing for a bite—went up to an old fig tree to look for some winter fruit. When he found naught but leaves he exclaimed indignantly and with what seemed to me unnecessary pathos, "Wither, may no fruit grow on thee henceforward forever!" This was in bad taste, as condemnation was purposeless. As far as I could see, the tree had born no fruit for years, no doubt would wither on his own accord and bear no fruit again. Of what use is it anyway to talk to trees!

SIXTH DAY

Cliff camp at Mount Tabor.

WHEN dawn came, we saw that we would have a busy day. The crowd on mules and camels and asses, in litters, palanquins and mulecarts bringing provisions with them. The place was well chosen. A few stones indicated where the speaker would stand, and from there the ground

SIXTH DAY

ran down in an even slope, to rise again after half a furlong in amphitheatre like fashion. It could easily accommodate ten thousands; still, it was not big enough for the crowd that came. It overflowed the adjacent hills, and with it came all sorts of showbooths, boys peddling pastry and pickles, carrying large trays on their heads, and venders of sweetmeats, fruit and colored waters delicious to drink. Only gamblers, loose women and thieves with misguided hands were barred. The Canaanite, who had been a camel driver, and Judas Iscariot, in flowing mantle and bright headcloth, both of worldly experience, knew their people and allowed nobody suspicious on the ground. Judas, glancing over the quickly gathering crowd, exclaimed "What a pity we are not allowed to make a collection. If that hermaphrodite of an Egyptian would make the rounds with a platter, we would have all sorts of coin, brass, silver and gold too. We could travel with so much more comfort, a regular caravan with pack mules and tents. Too bad that the Master will not have it, I suppose we have to obey his wishes."

The Master apparently was the first preacher known to history who introduced sermons with refreshments served. It came about in this fashion. The Master, sometimes naively kind, made the casual remark that it would be well to have in some shady place a spread of loaves, and fish, roast fowl and fruit, so that everybody who grew hungry could help himself. Peter and

SIXTH DAY

James sneered at the idea. Andrew grumbled "We have only a few loaves and fishes, what good would they do?" "Better than nothing," said the Master, "to those who want to eat. Cut it up into small slices." And so to humor him we spread the canvas cloth and under an awning displayed the little we had to offer. But it worked out miraculously well. As most people had brought their own provisions or dined in the field kitchens they did not care for any free luncheon; others were too shy to tackle the food as there was so little of it. On the contrary, some brought of their own viands and contributed generously, so that at the end of the day there was more to eat than had been in the morning. Notwithstanding they all commented on the good will and hospitality of the Master who not only offered them free entertainment but also free food to the best of his ability.

"No doubt," I remarked to Peter, "some day they will say that he had only five loaves and two fish and yet fed five thousand."

And at the noon hour the Master, seeing the great multitude, was moved with deep compassion and went forth and commanded them to sit down on the grass, and they sat down in companies by hundreds and by fifties. As he opened his mouth he was as transfigured, his face did shine as the sun and his raiment was white as light. He talked steadily for three hours and late in the afternoon again until dusk. And he repeated this the next two days, delivering his

SEVENTH DAY

Sermon on the Mount with slight variations, declaring his most important thoughts on man's conduct of life in regard to alms and prayer, the vanity of possessions, of forgiveness and true blessedness among mortals.

SEVENTH DAY

Cliff Camp on Mt. Tabor.

THERE is something wonderful about a crowd. It is like the rough outline of a picture before the artist has added the colors and details of life. Still, the feeling one receives does not even hint at the rich human quality of it all. The Master has the gift to keep this seething mass spell-bound, which is even more wonderful. There are thousands of people, all with their own personal interests, their own little thoughts; and their personality and emotion radiate into space and float like a quivering exhalation, a vibrating atmosphere above them. It is a force in itself, like waves that meet the speaker, that he has to contend with, that he has to conquer. His own radiation must counterbalance all the latent feelings that rise from the crowd and make them play in tune with his spirituality.

How does the Master manage it! The Master is an unusual speaker. His style is absolutely his own. He will have many imitators. Unhappily personal peculiarities are more easily imitable than technical merits. One cannot imitate thought and one cannot fake the deeper ex-

SEVENTH DAY

perience of life which gives the work of the Master its eloquence and grim charm. His voice is strangely magnetic, of glorious far-reaching quality stirring like the clash of cymbals and yet he speaks in a slow, deliberate, long-drawn voice. The tones of his voice are not ordinarily musical, but sound floods of deepest emotion. His peculiar clear-cut, thought-laden and yet so easily flowing diction demands it. He talks poetry, improvises it on the spur of the moment, even in everyday life, and I do not believe that it is in any way affected but has become second nature to him. His sentences are terse and they might become monotonous if they were not punctuated with dashes and fiery exclamations, and yet despite all passion and penetrative force, the tempo is always the same. His mechanism of breathing is masterly; each word comes out clear as if cut by a chisel in sandstone. There is no priest or Roman politician that can touch him in holding an audience. And it is never by any direct trickery or mannerism, he is only bent upon convincing.

He speaks with an authority that sounds undisputable, "Either believe or do not." What he says is final. And it is, after all, what he has to say, much more than how he has constructed the thought and delivers it, that produces the impression. His thoughts might be compared to lightning, not sheet lightning, but lightnings that mean to strike and do strike.

These observations were written down at our

EIGHTH DAY

cliff camp on Mt. Tabor, on the eighth evening of our journey, sitting at a wood fire of my own, now and then breaking the red hot branches into smaller pieces and raking them into piles of live coals. Our camp is way up on a cliff, a smooth expanse of grass encircled by a thicket of gray sheathed cedar trees. I dug out a little pit in the soft mat of needles, even as the Master does for himself. Mother Earth after all makes a good bed, and there is nothing finer than lying on the ground, half dreaming, half lost in thought, until the windsong in the cedars and the murmur of a waterfall in some distant crags, finally lulls me to sleep.

EIGHTH DAY

Cliff Camp on Mt. Tabor.

THIS is third day and the crowds prevail. The more I hear him, the more I think that it is his appeal to the lowly and meek,—and who is not lowly and meek in mind,—that works such wonders with the crowd. He speaks to the poor, the brokenhearted, the tormented and bruised, the sick and perverted, and to those who feel the shame of bondage, because he is sure of their sympathy, moreover an echo of sadness can be found in every human heart. For he puts his ideals uncommonly high, almost too high for an ordinary mortal. How can one offer to the thief who takes away one's coat, another one, perhaps the last cloak one has! Or pluck out an offend-

EIGHTH DAY

ing eye and cast it away! And what man would not be guilty if the mere looking at a woman in tinsel and finery and dance-like movements of the hips, constituted adultery? Does the Master himself love his enemies, bless the Pharisees that curse him, and do good to the Sadducees that hate him? Not a bit of it!

And yet if taken merely figuratively his gospel would be deprived of its greatest strength, the onward move towards something higher, to put the human ideal on the highest pinnacle that all may aspire and a few attain. But is this just to the weak! I fear I still argue too much like a scribe. Merely the desire to become purer in heart, to incessantly strive for more perfection may be what humanity needs most. The Master surely can not think that it is possible to all.

What he says about giving alms, that the left hand should not know what the right hand does, that prayer should be done in secret and not standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the street, that a man should not have a wife merely for the purposes of lust, that it is foolish to lay up for oneself treasures on this earth, that it would be wisest not to swear at all but merely communicate with an honest "yea yea" or "nay nay," all that is admirable. And the rewards that he promises. Yes, I believe they must appeal to every thinking mind if fully comprehended. There is too much of gross injustice in this world. If those who lead a wicked life, untrue to their own better understanding, are the

EIGHTH DAY

rulers of the land; and those who try to do their best and yet never succeed would be rewarded, the certainty of some future equalization would make one feel more hopeful.

The idea, that there is another life, alone is gratifying. There ought to be something, for otherwise this life would be too much of a satyr play. Strange, how nebulous all religions are on that point. Jesus of Nazareth is the first of religious teachers who tries to dispel the mist. He actually asserts that there is something more tangible than a shadowy floating through under-worlds of mist. But he does not say what it will consist of. Of course nobody can.

To sit at the feet of God, somewhere in the circle of the elect,—I do not want to blaspheme—for all eternity is unimaginable. So the problem is left as mythical as ever. One can not reach it with the brain. One must believe.

The Master has a way of repeating sentences, a parallelism of sentences slightly varied or directly reversed as, "Every good tree bringeth forth corrupt fruit," and then followed by "A good tree can not bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit." He then works the power of suggestion with double speed. If one hears a thing a hundred times one finally believes it, or one has not heard it at all.

So I may be converted unto true faith. I fear we, his followers, are all more or less doubting Thomases. And even those who are nearest to him, John and James, Peter and Mattheus, like

NINTH DAY

regular Sadducees, continually smile and shake their heads at some of his ideas. It is remarkable what patience he has with us, poor sinners!

NINTH DAY

WE were in Nain this noon and are journeying in a roundabout way through many of the smaller villages towards Samaria. The distances between one place and the next are not considerable, but we are invariably delayed by people bringing out their sick. They carry them about in beds and lay them in the streets. Others are propped up against a tree-trunk or stand tottering supported by the family on the roadside.

In one place, ten tramps suffering with leprosy came hobbling along the road. A horrible sight. Dirty, unkempt, with dead eyes and sunken nose, crooked fingers and toes, and red brown spots, knots and sores all over their bodies.

One of them said, "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make us clean."

The Master answered, "Go to the nearby brook and bathe, three times a day, and ye will be saved."

They were rather disappointed and hang about to hear more, but the Master turned away from them. Finally they twisted themselves out of sight.

Later on, after he had given a discourse to a crowd of villagers, one of them returned, fell down at the Master's feet, giving him thanks:

NINTH DAY

“I will follow thy advice, Lord—I feel much refreshed—Three times a day! It’s hard, but I’ll do it.”

“Where are the other nine?” queried the Master.

“They sneaked away, laughing thy wisdom to scorn, my Lord.”

The Master made a movement as if he was patting him, without touching his matty hair, “Arise, my son, go thy way, thy faith will make thee whole.”

As father has said, Jesus leaves a good deal to the future. No doubt cleanliness is the best cure for leprosy, and if a patient can be persuaded as far as taking special care of his body already much is gained. Likewise with the plague of blindness. One-half of all eye ailments could be avoided if people made war more vigorously upon flies, mice and other disease carriers. Lepers are plentiful, but they are surpassed in number by people who are possessed with devils. It is the fashionable disease of the day. There are some who claim that at least five, seven or even more devils had to be cast out of them before they would be normal again.

The Master says just a few words to command the spirits to leave. Is that all he does! You see it is mental suggestion, nothing more or less. If they believe that he can command evil spirits to come forth from the inner depths of their bodies, the cure is half achieved. At one occasion, so Bartholomew told me, a herd of swine passed by

TENTH DAY

and frightened turned to flight, and ran down a hill to be drowned in the river below. The Master did not hesitate for a moment to use the incident, announcing that the devils of his patients had departed and perished with the swine. It lifted the ban that lay upon them and made them mentally free again. To cure lunatics no doubt requires deep insight into human nature. I fear I would lack both patience and concentration to cast wickedness out of other people's mind.

Dishonesty, covetousness, deceit, lasciviousness, blasphemy, pride, foolishness; these are the real devils in men, and the Master is much more mighty in casting them out than the unclean spirits of clouded imagination.

Still as long as there are so many sorcerers, soothsayers and exorcists abroad, the art of healing is in need of a thorough cleansing, and the Master sets a good example.

TENTH DAY

WHEN we do so many towns in one day the Master speaks almost entirely in parables. He is a new embodiment of the professional storytellers of Arabia. He knows how to string three or four parables together like beads in a pleasing manner, going from one to the other, and in that way furnishes half an hour of instructive entertainment.

The people like this better than the preaching of abstract theories, generally far beyond their

TENTH DAY

comprehension. Besides parables have the merit of not being easily forgotten. They stick to the memory like burrs. The Master generally starts with a short introduction about the general lack of comprehension of thoughts and sentiments walking on crutches, and then begins with a rolling shout properly intoned, "Hear ye therefore the parable of the Sower." When he is through with the story, he asks—"Have ye understood all these things?" They eagerly reply, "Yea, Lord, every syllable, everything is clear," which, however, does not hinder the Master to make his explanation, inasmuch as the parable, unlike the fable, does not always explain itself.

In a fable cause and effect are one, the depicted incidents contain the moral. In a parable the moral is not told, the story is merely a story, and the moral can be derived only from contemplation of the meaning of characters and events. Thus many interpretations are possible.

And so he tells over and over again the parables of the Laborers in the Vineyard, of the Ten Virgins, the Mustard Seed, the Nobleman who received a kingdom, the Marriage of the King's Son, the Great Supper, the Lost Sheep and the Prodigal Son, the Unjust Steward, etc. I do not know whether they are as literary as those of Menenius Agrippa, for instance the one that illustrates the social relation of a citizen to the state by analogous relations of the different parts of body to the heart. I am not well read in foreign classics. But the parables of the Master ought to be collected in a parchment edition. To

TENTH DAY

me they represent the highest form of literature. Each story is perfect in itself, and encloses the necessary symbol like a ring the precious stone. May I compare it to a beautiful palatable fish who furnishes a delightful repast and when opened reveals a priceless pearl within its belly.

Jesus strictly adheres to the classic ideals of Hebrew literature, that have been allowed to deteriorate ever since the book of Job was written. Jewish writers follow Greek examples too closely. Even the works that seem to be most loyal to Israelitic tradition, like Ezekielos' tragedy "The Exodus from Egypt," Philo's poem "Jerusalem," Jason's long-winded five-book History of the Maccabean Wars, and the philosophical writings of our esteemed contemporary Philon possesses no longer the simplicity and sincerity of the older writings.

Already the first attempts at poetic expression as the "Song to the Spring" by Moses, the song of Deborah, Joseph's fables and Delilah's riddles, have that vagueness of definition, that free swing of elemental things which is one of the characteristics of Hebrew and all good poetry. Then we have Ruth, the story of old Jewish village life and the capricious book of Esther. Little religious thought in them, you may say, still sufficient for the scribes who read religion into everything.

Jesus the poet, learnt the most from the psalms of David, of Assaph, and the sons of Korah, and the elegies of Jeremiah, lines as bit-

TENTH DAY

ter as tears of acid wearing away a stone. From the psalms he learnt the brevity of expression, the descriptive power so vague and yet so conclusive, the moral preponderance over matter. The psalms are expressions of universal devotion, they really own the magic power to comfort us. Their flow of words is as copious as nature in some of her serenest moods, as the drift of seeds on the wind, or the snow flurries on the summits of Mount Lebanon. Jeremias (or was it Baruch, the copyist of his manuscripts?) furnished unsurpassed standards of austere grandeur and intensity of feeling. Notwithstanding David and Jeremiah both lack form, in which Hellenic art is so supreme. The Master knows the value of construction, his stories have a beginning, an end, and a logical sequence of events.

As for the lyrical prophecies of Isaiah, the diamond sagacity of the Proverbs and the erotic splendor of the incomparable Song of Songs—this vision of swinging lamps, incense, jewels, the rain of blossoms, the rustle of silken robes, and the all-pervading worship of masculinity stalking abroad naked like a god—they are not within the reach of the Master's vocabulary or emotion. Jesus of Nazareth is not an inventor of poetical imagery of that sort. He is beyond passion and for that reason stands supreme as a teller of dry parables, that have to be cracked like nuts. Through him and the few others just mentioned, the Hebrew literature had become the most vital spiritual literature of the world.

ELEVENTH DAY

This was a strenuous march today through the marshes of Jesreel, nothing but wild grass with scant settlements here and there. In every direction lay measureless distances that narrow the eye and teach restraint, shifting tracks of a sparse, shifting vegetation with the smell of moisture on the wind. Over all the sun red and burning. And in the distance four dark birds flew in a straight line close along the horizon.

ELEVENTH DAY

OUR camp is only a few stonethrows from the border line of Samaria and we will cross today. Some of the "minor" disciples feel very much disgruntled, and some have taken up their possessions and left in contempt and disgust, as they would not work for those Heathens, who believe in the sacrifice of children and of the virtue of women. The Master merely shook his head; as he saw them sneak away on the dusty road, murmured something like disbelievers, fools, and threw his head backward as if to free himself from unpleasant thoughts. Then he gave himself up to Peter who enjoyed not only the privilege of leaning against the Master's breast, but of attending to his bodily wants, as, for instance, scratching his back when the sandflies make life intolerable.

On this morning Peter turned into a barber, for a long time he had threatened to subject the Master's hair to a thorough combing and to trim

ELEVENTH DAY

his beard. His tools were not of an encouraging order, an old Egyptian comb and a pair of blunt scissors "made in Greece" were all he had at his disposal. It was an hour of torture, but the Master submitted to it cheerfully.

Peter as usual was in a jocose and talkative mood. The Master beckoned him to hold his tongue, and argued with himself. What about these Samaritans! Are they not in need of enlightenment? They are different, but Jews at heart. Were they not willing to fight the Romans, and did they not offer to assist in building the temple at Jerusalem? "Verily, I say unto you, they will enter the kingdom of heaven if their faith is eager. Who has ears to hear, let them hear. As for these of little faith, these doubters, they are not yet willing to forsake all."

Then Peter could not help interrupting the Master, saying slyly with a cunning twinkle in his eye, "Behold, I have forsaken all, and followed thee, what shall I have therefore?"

The Master smiled, "You will sit upon a throne all of your own, Peter, if you behave, but I surely believe that you, Peter, or any of you, would not deny me if you were in real danger for my sake."

At which Peter got all red with temper and demonstrated so violently, "even if it meant death he would not do so," that he almost hacked a piece out of the Master's chin. Likewise we all protested, but the Master smiled and replied, "Ye will see when the time cometh."

ELEVENTH DAY

I often wondered how the Master could lead the rough life of a man of the open road, without the slightest pretence of comfort. No doubt, he had roughed life like most of us and could go along with the minimum of necessities. He was scrupulously clean and although we always raced against time and the days were short, he always stopped for a bath whenever an opportunity offered itself. How does he keep his gown so spotless? I often asked myself, it seems to be his only one. Well, I found out that some of the disciples competed for the honor of washing it at night and drying it over the camp fire before dawn.

The Master always slept in the open, his feet a little higher than his head, as men of the desert do. It breaks the wind and you never catch a cold. We had a number of canvas roofs that could be hung on the branch of a tree, and then stretched taut with poles on the four points, but we never used them except in rainy weather, and the Master would not accept anything that the others could not share with him. He is a great drinker of water. He bends down to every well or at a river's edge, slides forward on his face and drinks and drinks until he can drink no more.

Just to be alive, active, doing something of import, and at the same time to feel the sun, to see colors, to hear sounds, and awake people to the warm pulsations of life and the everlasting beauties of nature, that seems to be the physical ideal of his private, most intimate out-of-door life.

TWELFTH DAY

TWELFTH DAY

BUT it makes those who associate with him, those few who truly love him,—to continue the thought of yesterday—sad that he is so self-centered and self-contained. When one looks at the beautiful curvature of his mouth one might hope that some words of affection would flow from those shapely lips. It never opens to emotional expression as words from friend to friend are spoken. He is to all immutable, even hard, not harsh. His compassion is intellectual, it is all spirit. And it is this perhaps which makes him so exceptional. He recognises the rights of everybody but prefers none, except it were Peter, Mattheus or John.

He wants us to be like him, to gather our strength out of our own selves, or out of the spiritual force about us. The Egyptian boy with his tinselled circus suit clings to me like a burdock, continually chattering his foolish thoughts. Perhaps he feels the same for me as I do for the Master. Strange, that there is so much natural inequality in this world. How can it ever be adjusted!

THIRTEENTH DAY

AND so we came to Sychar and the famous well and grove that Jacob gave to his son Joseph. Samaria is blessed by nature, it is one of the most beautiful spots we have passed through. Every-

THIRTEENTH DAY

where a vast expanse, soft undulations of fruit orchards rising to hills overgrown to the very tops with cypresses, oak and beech forests. Oh those snowy blossoms of apricot trees! Oh those rosy blossoms of peach trees! The almond trees were in leaf, the hawthorn in bloom and the fig trees were putting forth their tender green. They are not eager out here to hear him, they even besought him, fearing the authorities, not to speak and to depart out of their lands. So there we sat near the well watching the blue of creeping shadows on the sunny slopes, as the soft mists of the valley began to rise, and cattle came walking in towards their stables. And the women of Sychar, chaste and stately figures, came to draw water. What beautiful attitudes they assumed as they stooped to let their earthen jars slip down on a rope into the darkness below; the play of muscles when they hauled up the filled vessels; the turn of the hips as they seized and placed them on their shoulders. How the contemplation of this delightful motion of lines and planes should be of evil, I can not understand.

The Master himself was engaged in a long and serious conversation with one of the women. She had the most perfect pair of legs I ever saw on a woman, and she was well aware of it, as she frequently shifted from one foot to the other. Apparently she wondered that he, a Jew, spoke so kindly to a Samaritan woman, and thought that it was due to her personal charms. The Master no longer sees that sort of thing. She

FOURTEENTH DAY

gave him to drink and asked many questions. She did not seem satisfied with his answers and I heard her say something of a coming Messiah, that when he came he would tell all things.

And Jesus said, "I that speak unto thee am he," and she smiled shyly, shook her head with wondering eyes, wandered away forgetting her water pot, not knowing at the moment whether she dealt with a madman or a prophet.

I was deeply impressed as I had never heard from his own lips that he was for whom we had waited so long, the great prophet called Christ whose coming so many prophets had announced. Peter wanted to know why he had talked to her. The Master did not answer Peter, and refused to go to supper when they asked him to eat. He was deeply absorbed in thought, and is becoming so more and more, as we approach Jerusalem.

But the woman seemed to have done a great deal of gossiping, because in the evening crowds of Samaritans came and asked him if he would not tarry with them and give them an exclusive talk. And he did as they desired, then and there, as the next day our way lay for many furlongs East to the Jordan river.

FOURTEENTH DAY

THIS was the longest march yet. Up at dawn and still on the legs late in the evening, a laborious route down hills and then along a little

FOURTEENTH DAY

stream, where oleanders shed their rosy bloom into the Jordan valley. During the noon hours we took a long rest under a cliff hanging over just far enough to make a strip of cool shadow below. A pool of water nearby, almost dried out, did not permit us to bathe, so we flapped flies for a while and tried to revive, for the world was a veritable heat trap outside. The Master sat on a rock all by himself in the full glare of the sun.

Whereupon we, the inner circle of the elect to which I now somehow belonged due to James' patronage no doubt, held a discussion as we liked to do whenever time permitted, and argued of course matter pertaining to the Master.

"Was the Master ever in India?" asked Philip.

"Why do you not ask the Master?" suggested Peter, making himself comfortable on some ferns.

"I did ask him, just a moment ago."

"And what did he reply?" we eagerly inquired.

"He said, I have been in many strange lands, beloved."

"Just like him," Peter laughed and we all joined him. We were mean enough to find every rebuke from the Master a cause of great hilarity, as long as we could laugh at the expense of another.

"You, John, probably know," I hinted to John who was versed in all those matters.

John squeezed his cheekbones as in deep medi-

FOURTEENTH DAY

tation and mused for a while. Then he began in his usual languid tone of voice: "Yes, the Master has been in opulent India, several long years, I believe—quite a while ago. You know, Jesus refused to be betrothed to a girl at the early age customary with us and left home a mere boy. He went with merchants to magic India, so goes the legend, to grow more accomplished and to study the laws of life of the great Buddha. He went to the gentle Brahmins and studied the ponderous Vedas. He did not get along with them, as he took the doctrine of the equality of man in their relation to God literally, and found fault with the Vedas and Puranas."

"Is this not curious?" I interpolated, "as he believes in different rewards. Is not the consciousness that we are better than so many others apt to make a stumbling stone for the exercise of true humility? The Pharisees think that they are the chosen ones and behave with arrogance in consequence, just as the Sadducees think themselves superior to the Pharisees, the average Jew to the Gentile, and we, I suppose, to all others."

"Talk for yourself," said Alpheus, and his brother Mattheus nodded seriously.

"I am sure Peter agrees, as he considers himself, I believe, the king of us all," said Phillip drily.

It was meant as a joke but Peter grew angry at the harmless remark and grunted "No king is honored in his own kingdom."

"That is pure purloin, Peter, of what the Mas-

FOURTEENTH DAY

ter said at Nazareth the other evening," grinned Bartholomew. At which Peter fumed forth, "Oh, you who are all so original, you chipmunks you, hole-drillers, healthy-thought-destroyers!"

Matthew saved the situation, in criticising my argument, that the difference of rewards, as they were not given out on earth and for that reason were only imaginary or assumptive, could not be compared to any actual division of humanity, and he would not listen to the objection that different appreciations of goodness in man could after all call forth some direct class distinction. "You reckon with something that has not yet been tested."

"He also objected to the intricate trinity of Brahma, Vishnu and Siwa," continued John, who felt flattered when he could bring about a heated argument.

"That I can readily understand," said Andrew, "as they represent absolutely contending forces. One is the god of evil, the other of goodness—it is not like the Master's symbol of trinity, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, which are one and the same thing."

"They are not the same thing," hotly replied Peter, "God is one power and Christ another, and the Holy Spirit coming from the Father, finds expression as a uniting link in their duality."

"Well, if you take it that way, then you can assert as easily that they are three separate forces, God, Christ, his representative on earth,

FOURTEENTH DAY

and the Holy Spirit, which can also become active in other beings, in those who believe," slowly uttered Bartholomew, scratching his left ear.

Mattheus folded his hands over the corpulency of his stomach, and stretched his neck, "Strange arithmetics you indulge in, boys, they would make Aristotle roll in the grass with mirth. Three can not be one and three can not be two. Three is three, and one is one. And two is out of the question."

"Well, what is it then?" Peter sneered.

"God will always be considered the beginning and source of all divinity," James said deliberately, "the Master does not say that he is God. He is the Son, granted symbolically speaking (for I do not put much faith in the nativity stories) and the Word is an unknown force."

"That makes what, two and a half?" Phillip asked flippantly, contorting his face into a grimace, "And by the by, whoever proved that trinity means divinity, is it not merely an attribute?"

"That ends the discussion, friends," said Mattheus.

"Wait a moment," said John, rousing himself from his customary self-absorption, "Could we not imagine that like the *logos* of Plato—surely Christ possesses supernatural qualities—enjoyed a pre-existence, that he existed from the very beginning and now appears to redeem us, as we have made such bad use of our legacy, of the world he has specially created for us."

FOURTEENTH DAY

"Too far-fetched," commented James.

"Well," Mattheus resumed, "what I wanted to say, we believe, I think we all do"—and he sharply looked at me—"that Jesus is the long-expected Messiah. Now, whether God and the Holy Spirit are one or two, what is the difference? God is there above in some star castle, and Christ is here below, sitting on the rock over there. They are two—closely connected—but after all two."

"Besides," Mattheus' brother chimed in sarcastically, "if the Holy Spirit were a part of the unit God, then we who are supposed to be filled with it, would turn into minor gods ourselves. And it does not seem to me that we go quite as far as that."

"This is getting quite Pythagorean," Phillip burst out laughing, "I suppose we count that as *Tetraktys*, ten, the great number that contains all other lucky numbers."

"Well, the wisest after all is if everyone makes his own choice," said Andrew, making gestures as if he caught imaginary fish.

"How can we, have we not all to teach the same?" I asked in dismay.

"The way as we understand it, son," Mattheus replied.

"Is the argument closed?" asked John, "if so, let me relate the little I have still to say about the Master's mystic stay in opulent, magic India. The gentle Brahmins, disgruntled like our Pharisees, a parallel case, persecuted him, and he fled

FOURTEENTH DAY

into steep mountains to a peaceful Buddhist monastery where he learnt the soft Pali language and explored the white wisdom of the Sutras. On the way back through the heathen countries, he preached against idol worship and in Persia he got interested in the Zend Avesta, but soon discarded it and objected publicly to the principle of evil advocated therein which brought down upon him the wrath of the priesthood."

"I do not believe that he was much influenced by any of these doctrines," I ventured forth with considerable sincerity, "I believe that from the very start his heart went out to the lowly born and the laboring class, and that he taught even then that the spirit of God was alive in every human being and that one can worship him not by sacrifices, but by perfection and purity of heart."

"Yes, and that is the reason why he refused to become a prophet out there—it is said that one of the great saints of India chose him to teach the blue-flamed words of Buddha. As if he could teach anybody else's idea whether green or blue but his own," and John rolled his eyes to the sky.

"You mean God's?" said Phillip.

"Do not let us start the argument over again," begged Bartholomew.

"For all the little prophets, no," growled Peter, who was still angry; he had not said as much as John had.

FIFTEENTH DAY

At that moment Uncle Gabriel's trumpet sounded the signal for the continuance of the march, and we yawned, stretched ourselves, seized our belongings, and became once more the ardent pilgrims of the Path.

FIFTEENTH DAY

WE emerged from a grove of banana palms and saw an unobstructed view of the Jordan before us. The noise of rushing waters had prepared us but the sight that greeted us contained beauties beyond our expectation. It was a scene of desolation; the grasses and weeds had ■ parched and yellow look, but the waters were wide and swift, and slid onward like an enormous green, slippery snake for many furlongs, disappearing in a strange world of furrowed and scarred chalk cliffs, steep, narrow gullies, and fantastic rock formations. On a sandy strip we halted. There was no ferry so we had to wade and swim through it. To us erstwhile fishermen this seemed an easy task, but the swirling eddies around rocks in the middle of the stream appeared less negotiable to the others. "The current will help," said James, and wasting no more words and without further hesitation, we stripped to a man.

Never will I forget that scene. The cloudless sky, the expanse of water with its foamwhirls, the oppressive heat that came blowing from the South, the unusual sounds, sights, odors, and a

FIFTEENTH DAY

quiver in the air like a hum of blinding sunlight. And into this sun-governed scene suddenly was added the curious animation of some eighty naked men, shouting and splashing in the waters, struggling to hold their clothes aloft. Eighty naked men, snorting with pleasure, excited with the coolness of the currents, waded bravely towards the eddies. But there some began to slip in the muddy river bed and got their feet caught. The water pressed tighter around them, and their bodies sank lower and lower.

"Beware of the shifting bottom and changing current," shouted Andrew.

"Onward," commanded short-legged Peter, just at the moment when he made a misstep that enveloped his stalwart form to the neck. With only his nose and shining eyes and raised arms above the foam he looked so ridiculous that Mattheus could not resist the temptation of squirting water at him.

This infuriated the son of Mary so, that unmindful of getting his clothes wet he threw himself on his stomach and began with one arm and legs to beat and kick the water, producing such an uproar in the wet element that the former custom officer lost his bearing and disappeared in the churn, to rise again with his hair dripping, and spitting and blowing like the veritable embodiment of a river god.

When one-third across the line of progress broke and many were swept down with a rapidity which showed the power of the current. Some

FIFTEENTH DAY

labored when the current struck them, and floundering about blocked those behind. The Egyptian with his nose up and flanks shining swam like a fish steering himself cleverly around the rocks. A few trying to help one another hung together to be separated again by the first wave that slapped them, to be thrown from crest to crest or whirled round and round like spinning tops. Others were thrown forward in the backlash of the waves and dragged into what must have seemed to them a caldron of mischievous forces. Old Bartholomew and Andrew, wheezing and coughing, hung back, but none could help obeying the downward will of the current. Finally the fierce contention of waves lessened, the threshing of cross waves straightened, and their feet touched ground again. One after the other staggered up with loud snorts, and fell on the sand, all pounded out of breath. Their belongings were all wringing with water but otherwise they felt little worse for the venture.

Some of the minor disciples had insisted on carrying the Master over. He had consented, but when his bearers arrived in midstream, began to stumble about, he ordered them back, jumped off their arms and tied two large planks to his sandals, and then ran across the waters so rapidly that he did not sink. Verily, he walked on the waters, as all must believe who saw him making his way over the foaming surface.

"This was a baptism indeed," laughed Phillip. The Master, untying the planks from his rosy

FIFTEENTH DAY

feet, smiled, "Yea, if Peter and Mattheus had offered a blessing instead of increasing the disturbance of the sliding and curling waters, it would have done as well as any other way. Place and time mean nothing."

After a well deserved rest we proceeded. What a beautiful valley, prodigal in vegetation. Not exactly a land of milk and honey, but a wilderness of wild flowers. There was hardly any room for grass, it was all flowers. Large patches of yellow, large patches of white, stripes of orange and purple, clusters of pink and blue.

Queer, I mused, these wild flowers, do they live the finer life or do they become more fully developed under some kind gardener's care. These flowers thrive the best they can, and apparently never make a mistake in the selection of the field of activity most suited to them. The flowers of the marshes and sand dunes do not grow in the rocky woods of the mountains, and the wayside flowers refuse to bloom in bogs. If they do not refuse to be cultivated, they become a different species. They acquire double chalices, more fragile colors, some become seedless and others lose their thorns. And how do the flowers escaped from the gardens fare? What is preferable, the natural growth or the gardener's skill? Which gives the greater thrill? The wildflowers who merely furnish a carpet and a colorful background to the passerby or the artificial products of gardens and glass shelters who are more tenderly cared for and yet are little more than

SIXTEENTH DAY

an occasional ornament, a fleeting sensation of color and scent?

Who will decide? The flowers will bloom on, each leading the short life opening at dawn and sleeping under the light of stars.

SIXTEENTH DAY

*Along the Jabbock, the mountains
of Gilead to the left.*

WHY always this tantalizing doubt! Why do I always find fault and am so easily offended? James asked the Master today the stupid question, whether he and his brother were not entitled to sit with him in his kingdom. The Master said that his cup was not theirs to drink from and that certain privileges were prepared exclusively for him. We were all moved with indignation against the two brethren. Alas, more open to censure is, that also I failed to bring my thoughts into harmony with the Master's answer.

Only a few days ago when we asked him whom of us he would choose as his representative, in case anything should happen, he answered rather evasively, "Whoever will be great among you. And whosoever will be great among you, he will be the servant. For the greatest will be the humblest and the humblest will be the greatest." How do these two utterances rhyme! If perfect equality, though unattainable, be desirable here on earth, should it not find its realization in the beyond? According to his doctrine one should

SIXTEENTH DAY

strive to become his equal, and at the same breath he denies the possibility of such an equality. Why then strive for it here? Of course, he is the one exception. But if we are divine and a part of God, no matter how small, why must he continue his part of superiority in the beyond? That he comes to this earth to minister unto us I can understand. It is a sin offering for our wickedness and incompetence. He is showing us the ideal life. To struggle the best we can, to believe and to be rewarded in heaven.

But is not the Messiah, promised for centuries, to be an actual king? Is the scripture to be taken literally or are prophesies accepted merely as ideals that will never be realized? Now the Master tells us that he impersonates the idea. Still, he does not actually govern.

Like any philosopher he attempts merely to govern our minds. He tells us what is good or of evil, and what punishment or reward is awaiting us according the results of our mode of living. He himself leads this bitter disappointing existence, this fight for supremacy as an example. He knows his recompense and wants others to know theirs. Well then it is the question whether we accept him as the Messiah or whether the real Messiah is still to come. Some thought it was John the Baptist.

Could not Peter or Mattheus or I assume the same? No, we lack—what? In plain words the belief that such a thing is possible. A man to do that must be swayed by elemental forces like

SEVENTEENTH DAY

fire, air or water. He must be what we fail to understand. To imagine non-existence is impossible. To imagine eternity is equally so. There are many strata of experience closed to the senses of man. The dog on the trail, the hawk on the downward swoop, prove our insufficiency even in the world of sensations. The doctrine *God is the World* is incomprehensible. There would be no use of redeeming it. A god does not need to supervise his own education. To me the World is God. Why otherwise all these animals devouring each other, these plagues, earthquakes, famines and wars! We must accept the world as it is because it is. While the supernatural is the inscrutable and unexplained, the realm of infinity which the human mind cannot grasp and which shines into the house of consciousness solely through the window of belief.

There it is, always the same, it is belief. Believe and you will see the vision of the throne, the glory of angels and the horned beasts of blasphemy, and own a mystic world that is closed to others!

SEVENTEENTH DAY

Camp at Gadda.

WE have had West winds before, but to-night the result was not a mere shower, but a veritable cloudburst. We had scarcely time to put up our tents before solid walls of rain surrounded us, and so we sat close around the fire, soaked to the

SEVENTEENTH DAY

skin in the back and unbearably hot in front, as if Chasrim himself was bent upon devouring us with his fiery breath. Bartholomew, his cloak girded high, displaying his red drawers and stockings, resembled a rain-drenched stork.

If I remember rightly we were ten in the gathering. James and John were absent as they had gone to Jerusalem to arrange the details of the "Temple Meetings," but the Canaanite and Judas Iscariot were there on a leave of absence. The topic was not a particularly cheerful one, for stroking his wrinkled forehead, had given voice to the important fact, that surely something would happen in Jerusalem, that the Master might be arrested, that he, Bartholomew, felt worried and could not sleep at nights, being disturbed by dismal dreams and visions.

The Canaanite—"Well, brethren, it will depend all on what he says. He may surprise us."

Judas—"Yes, this is his great opportunity. The Master at this moment is easily the most talked of personality in Palestine. He now could make a strong, convincing appeal to the masses, they would stand up for him. The time is ripe. If he lets this chance go by, we all will be the losers."

Son of Alpheus—"You do not take in consideration that he is as much hated as loved. The Pharisees will lay every possible obstacle in his way. Have they not made several attempts to slay him? They are afraid of his growing power."

SEVENTEENTH DAY

Mattheus—"He is safer in Jerusalem than anywhere else. Besides to punish him, in case he should be arrested, lies in the hands of the Roman authorities."

Phillip—"Yes, and they do not care about our squabbles. Though Pilate and Herod may be devils incarnate, one must grant that they are more tolerant about such matters than we are."

Peter—"Liberal out of sheer ignorance, I agree."

Phillip—"All the same, to them it is indifferent whether a man is an Essenean or Samaritan, a Pharisee or a Sadducee, or the follower of some prophet. They worship their own gods. Jupiter and Mercury, and probably Bacchus and Venus most of all, and look at us merely as taxpayers."

Mattheus—"Granted, and whoever said that we had to fear the Romans? The danger lies with the Pharisees. Jerusalem is a very cosmopolitan city, but they are politically the strongest. Even Pilate has realized that. Their intolerance is so well organized that they control the mob majority. If they believed that the Master was the Messiah, all gates would be open to him. But no, they themselves want to discover and patronize the Messiah. The scribe Simeon ben Hillel could do something—but after all the liberal Pharisees are a small party in comparison—to the followers of that fanatic Hammai. They want to domineer and keep in favor by promising

SEVENTEENTH DAY

the great revolution that will make Israel free again."

Lebbeus—"It seems to me that the real opposition to the Master's doctrine comes from the Sadducees. The word as it is written in the law of Moses that is all they can grasp."

Peter—"Pshaw, they care for naught but their own infallibility."

The Canaanite—"Furthermore the Master is no transgressor, as he sticks to the statutes and commandments. True, he fights the abuse of them. That should please the Sadducees. They have no use for the Pharisees. They are a dumb, cold, slimy lot like fish anyhow."

Phillip—"Even fish may buzz. I am no fisherman, I read that in Aristotle."

Peter—"They are parrots and apes, the whole pack of them, the table of showbread, the candlesticks, the mercyseat, that is all they can see. To walk in long robes, to be greeted in the market place, to occupy the highest seats in the synagogues and the chief rooms at feasts, that is their conception of life."

Judas—"The Master should really have a regular bodyguard, not that Peter is inefficient, I mean a staunch brotherhood in arms should offer their support."

The Canaanite—"What would the Master say to that? He objects even to our carrying staves or sticks."

Andrew—"Besides we are not soldiers. Who of us can put up a real fight? Have you ever

SEVENTEENTH DAY

seen a Roman war camp? How everything is divided, equipped, everything thought and taken care of?"

Lebbeus—"Have the Esseneans ever been approached?"

Peter—"Pshaw, young man, do you not know what they amount to? They are cowards. They want to remain in the shade. They are naught but mild, perverted Pharisees."

Andrew—"I think the Master desires material success as little as John the Baptist."

Judas—"Has he not said often enough, only two nights ago, that he did not come to send peace on earth, but a sword?"

Lebbeus—"I believe he does not mean it in that way; there will be great dissension and secession in the fight for truth, still he does not wish to conquer materially, but by word alone."

Mattheus—"A difficult proposition."

Judas—"Something must be changed. We can not forever continue like this. There is something like living too close to earth. It finally turns one into worms."

Lebbeus—"I see no objection to others doing the fight for him. He, personally, I am convinced, does not want to fight."

Bartholomew—"He believes in the ultimate victory of his ideas in the future—not in the present."

Judas—"How can you make a Samaritan a believer without hitting him with a pickaxe on the head?"

SEVENTEENTH DAY

Peter—"By making him a 'good Samaritan!' By all holy flesh hooks and fire pans, I converted some."

Matthew—"Violence breeds violence, a commonplace, true enough. The only remedy is complete annihilation, and that surely does not harmonize with 'love thy neighbor as thyself.'"

Bartholomew—"I have sometimes thought—you may laugh at the idea as much as you like, I do not mind—that the man to benefit humanity most would be he who had something to offer that would make life easier, for instance, to keep our trowsers in place, or something that would relieve womenfolk of the everlasting cleaning of platters, or a device to furnish pure air to those who are forced to live huddled together in foul and unwholesome places, some remedy to prevent catarrh or a system that would provide all people with sufficient honey from Hymettus. The everlasting toil and misery must cease. They can not all live like us. There must be more time for learning and pleasure."

The majority of the listeners either thrust out their underlip, shook their heads or shrugged their shoulders in indifference or disapproval.

Matthew—"More comfort, dear Bartholomew, may be desirable, still comfort is not religion. A religious ideal can not be placed too high, or the people will do nothing towards self-improvement. The lower you put the ideal, the less they will do."

Andrew—"Besides, all this has nothing to do

EIGHTEENTH DAY

with the Master, the present situation, or the subject we were discussing. The question remains, will the Master be arrested, and if so, what shall we do?"

Thereupon we all rose, turned our backs to the fire and tried to get dry on the other side.

(Bartholomew's words somehow made a deep impression upon me at the time, and I have often ruminated over it since in after years.)

EIGHTEENTH DAY

At the Desert's Edge.

"WHAT, by the great Balaam, are you up to?" grumbled Peter, as he came strutting along, arm in arm with Mattheus.

"Making a scourge for the Master. I do not know what for."

He has asked me to do so, and so I had cut an old leather water bag into strips, and tying them into sturdy knots at one hand, wove the others into a handle, that I intended to ornament with some gold braid.

"I see," Peter said, nodded knowingly and went his way.

Matthew also nodded, but with a mien of approval, as if he admired my handiwork.

"We of Capernaum know how to tie threefold knots, do we not?" I said looking up. "I hope the Master will try them on Caiaphas, or some of the elders.

"Their robes need dusting," replied Matthew, "but will you enlighten me why we strayed to

EIGHTEENTH DAY

this land of thorn bushes, scrub oaks and treeless hills?"

"You've got me, it's true, nobody seems to live here. The tentdwellers have no use for us, and the few Jews are all getting ready to spend Passover in Jerusalem. If there was only some grub. Jehovah's kingdom for a melon! How the teeth would break into the rosy meat, and how the juice would swamp lips and tongue, and clutter down the throat!"

"No use looking here for anything like that," smiled the Canaanite, who was at home in these parts.

Yes, it looked like a futile day. We were all hungry and stupid or irritable in consequence. Phillip was trying to catch locusts without much success. Judas flapped flies. Bartholomew had entirely disappeared in his wrappings. The others dozed or yawned, while the Egyptian practiced some new act of contortion of walking on his hands and sitting on his head at the same time.

Still, I was making the scourge, and the Master in the distance was walking up and down, up and down a foot path on the side of a hill, gesticulating vehemently with his expressive hands, no doubt preparing and rehearsing his Jerusalem lectures.

The Master has grown more unsociable and taciturn of late and dismissed us after an imaginary luncheon with a reprimand, "Be silent; your chatter takes all the strength out of me.

NINETEENTH DAY

Leave me, do not speak to me, do not touch me, do not look at me. For I feel like Jonas on his third day in the whale's belly."

NINETEENTH DAY

Near Gilead.

AND some people deny the Master the gift of having any humor! Intimate knowledge of plant and animal life may escape his too inner vision; would he not otherwise have written parables about mock oranges, the roses of Jericho, about goats, gophers, locusts and bees?

But humor, why he has nets full of it. What is humor? Something that makes us smile, laugh, or chuckle, something that calls forth a pleasant sensation and furthers our digestion. It is a mental stimulant towards cheerfulness and a sunny disposition, a broom to sweep away cobwebs from under the rafters of brains. To compare his own troubles to Jonas' half a week's stay in a whale's belly, that constitutes humor. There are many stages of humor.

If we see a pair of monkeys making love between the humps of a camel's back, or see a very tall, lean man arguing with a very stout, short man not unlike the Master and Peter, or surprise a matron with a score of children grouped about her and the latest triplet on her lap, that is comical. It is the unusual, the extravagant, and the contrast of otherwise natural conditions, which makes one laugh.

NINETEENTH DAY

When a man is so fat that he can not move, if a mountebank succeeds in hiding his nose with his underlip, or somebody is represented with having arms of such length that they can be twisted twice around the body, that is ridiculous. Impossible exaggerations without any special cause, merely to make objects look funny, bring this about. The coarse and vulgar neigh like horses when they see it.

On the other hand if Phillip would dryly remark that James and John would not object to beings called the Kings of heaven, that would be irony. It provokes a smile. It is like the blade of a new knife, sharp and glittering. Then again if somebody would draw a picture of Herod overflowing with virtue, in a Joseph attitude, in the presence of some stout Jewish matron,— that would be a satire. It rouses forth the laugh that kills. Kings have been dethroned by such ridicule.

Humor is finer than all this stuff. It deals with human shortcomings shifted into queer contrast. The author must have remained sufficiently naive to laugh without bitterness. He must be able to invent situations which make you smile but do not offend. It is a combination of the comic and ethical. Entire parables like the Good Samaritan and the Prodigal Son are written in that vein.

It is a combination of the comic and ethical. That a camel will sooner pass through a needle's eye than a rich man enters heaven, that false

NINETEENTH DAY

prophets are like wolves in sheep's clothing, or that one should be more concerned of the beam in one's own eye than the mote in somebody else's, —all these utterances are humorous by strong contrasts as delightful as they are true. Camel and beam are large quantities, mote and needle's eye particularly small ones.

That the blind can not lead the blind without falling into a ditch, that hollow ears of corn are like a foolish person's children, that a candle does not belong under the bed but on a candlestick, are maxims, released with a twinkle of mirth that is unmistakable.

That lilies do not toil and spin, and that ravens do not sow or reap is superb humor, investing plants and animals with broad human attributes, still it is the application that renders them humorous. Even his word of cheer, "Arise, take up thy bed and walk," has that note. Who could help smiling at seeing a sick person carrying his cotton or grass mattresses, his pillows and covers, through a crowded thoroughfare? We dream of such actions and feel ashamed and smile when we awaken. And yet this humor does not deprive it of sincerity, as even in laughter the heart may be sorrowful.

And so many of his casual or explanatory remarks as "You strain at a gnat and swallow a camel," or "Heaven where neither moth nor rust corrupt" have a vague touch of gratification as if hearing a party making merry in the distance.

And how He can concentrate a humorous sit-

TWENTIETH DAY

uation into few words as of the Busybody who needs must call in his friends and neighbors when he has found something which was lost (as if anybody ever did that), or his advice to the bridegroom of Cana to set forth the good wine first and then offer the inferior stuff, moreover the stories of the foreman of the vineyard who pays the laborer who worked one hour as much as those who bore the heat and burden of the entire day, or of the man who would not get up in the middle of the night, as he was in bed with his children, to give a friend (no doubt a person of great modesty and tact) the three loaves of bread which the same was pounding at the door for.

It is all so truly human, humanly ridiculous, like little white kids teasing their mother by running away, like the bird that imprisons his spouse so that she will not forsake her young, like cedar trees with their branches raised imploringly landwards, resembling old women running away from the sea.

TWENTIETH DAY

As we approached Jericho, the highway was thronged with Passover pilgrims and their pack mules, but the multitude that had turned out from the opposite direction was even larger. It looked as if the whole city had come to meet us. Doubting Thomas, out of sheer enthusiasm, blew his trumpet again and again, and although the walls

TWENTIETH DAY

of Jericho could not fall asunder, as they had never been rebuilt, it drew the crowds in our direction so that we could hardly walk.

Way up on the topmost branch of a sycamore tree, we saw a bearded head peering through the foliage at us with an expression of awe and ecstasy. The Master had espied him and displayed at once his wonderful insight into human nature. He must have argued to himself in this fashion: Why is he up there? To get a good look at me. Wherefore climb a tree? The press is great, still one can see. He must be small of stature and very eager. Howbeit he must be a devotee. Furthermore, he must be rich, as he does not care for appearances. Which was all true.

And so the Master called him. "Make haste and come down, for to-day I must abide at thy house." And while Zaccheus made haste and came down, I remarked: "This sycamore climber has gained immortality to-day. His name will be known centuries hence as the man who wanted to see Christ so badly that he scaled a tree," at which utterance the Master was highly pleased.

Zaccheus received us joyfully and invited the Master and us Ten to spend the day and dine with him. He would do the utmost to please us. And we departed for his mansion and the crowd wondered equally that Zaccheus made the invitation and that the Master accepted it. For Zaccheus thereabouts was considered fabulously rich and a great sinner. He was said to have

TWENTIETH DAY

acquired his wealth in crooked ways and lived on the fat of the land by making others lean.

And when we arrived at the portals of Zaccheus' villa amidst palm-trees and open flowers, women came with alabaster boxes of ointment of precious spikenard, calamus and myrrh, and poured it upon us.

Andrew considered this an awful waste, but the Master silenced him with "Nothing is wasted when it is given in good faith and good odor is wrought thereby. The poor ye will always have with you, but me ye will not have always."

"Nay, nothing East or West of Jordan is too good for Jesus," recited Judas, "nor where the Nilus, the Tagus or the Ister flow, not in Caledonia's mist-bound realms or Dacia's fruitful vales, neither at Thebae, Rome, Byzantium or all the Augustas and Cesareas of the world, or at the straits of Tingar where two Oceans meet——"

"By the golden calf and molten sea, let up—that's enough for you, Judas," we shouted at this lyrical outburst.

And Zaccheus, radiant with the pleasure of entertaining such a popular character and great preacher, linked his arm familiarly into the Master's and said, "You must write your name into my guest book, and you, his followers, too. But first we will look over the farm and then go to dine. It will be the best the house can afford. I have an Achajean cook."

And he lead us through fields with the coming

TWENTIETH DAY

of the first-fruits of the wheat harvest. Next to the field were extensive orchards in full bloom, terraces of vineyards, and there were almond groves and tracks with set sugar cane. Zaccheus was a conqueror of the soil. He was a wonderful versatile and active man with the keen instinct for building up a fortune by cunning and other people's toil. He was a farmer, a grafter of fruit trees, a builder of vineyards, a breeder of bisons and white asses, a herder of sheep and goats, and owner of oxen for ploughing and harvesting, and camels and dromedaries for transportation. In the mountains he had scores of hewers of stone and timber, and legions of laborers for burden bearers in the fields.

"Lord, behold," Zaccheus said, "they call me a wicked man, yet I give one-tenth of my earnings to the poor. If I have taken anything of any man, I have also given with lavish hands." And the Master smiled and had no particular fault to find, which seemed strange to some of us.

In the dining hall burnt dozens of Roman lamps, and music of harp and viol, tabret and pipe was sounding pleasantly. And all the table service, pots, vessels, basins, platters, spoons, was of precious metals, even to the snuff disks of the lamps. And the table was of shittim wood, made with no tools of iron, and heaps of roses were spread on the tablecloth. We were seated on dyed ram skins, and everybody was filled with joy, as the dinner lasted three hours and was as opulent as one of Solomon's feasts to the Queen

TWENTIETH DAY

of Sheba. The succession of viands was like a poem, and should be remembered, as it proceeded, as Zaccheus so aptly said, "in honor of our guest, the Lord that has come to us from Galilee." And it was in this sequence the cup-bearers passed the food offerings:

Poppy Seeds. Oysters cooled in Mt. Lebanon Snow.
Sardines with slices of hard boiled Eggs. Salted
Sturgeon from the Oceanus Britannicus. Broiled
Crabs from the Mediterranean with Asparagus.
Roast Chicken from Gaul, stuffed. Wild Boar garnished
with Squabs. Boiled Kison Trout. Young Hares
Belgica with Truffles.
Pastry in the shape of a Cherubim riding a Dolphin, filled
with pieces of Beef Tenderloin from Helvetia. Roman
Gooseliver. Cabbage and Breasts of Pigeons.
Apples from Verona. Fresh Cyprus Figs and Dates.
Nuts and Cakes of various kinds.
Young Wine mixed with Honey. Red Table Wine Bottled
on Zaccheus' Farm. Sorrentino. Yellow Falerno, 50
years old.

Zaccheus, as so many of the rich, aped the Herodean Style, involuntarily, perhaps. Whenever a country is in danger of becoming a dependency or has become one, the rich therein imitate, no doubt for material reasons, the table manners, fashions and amusements of their or would-be conquerors, as the Greeceans did the Romans, and the Phoeniceans once the Greek. The party was hilariously gay, we were all half starved and glad to make amends.

Also the Master partook freely and for the time seemed to have forgotten his troubles. But towards the end of the meal he suddenly grew very pale and a slight shudder run over his body.

TWENTIETH DAY

“What ails thee, Master? Dost thou suffer from indigestion?” said the ever watchful Peter.

“This may be the last feast we attend together,” the Master replied.

“Oh, cruel Master, thou wilt send us on the road to preach the heathens in foreign lands,” jested Phillip, “notwithstanding a long separation that would not hinder us of meeting again.”

But the Master shook his head in sadness.

“Art thou afraid that they will arrest thee?” asked Peter bluntly.

“Worse than that, brethren, I fear, ye will lose me and see me no more.”

Consternation was on all our faces and we made all sorts of gestures of protest, that such a thing was impossible. Peter exclaimed, “Are we not with thee? We would not let happen anything to thee.”

And Zaccheus asked across the table, “Lord, are you in need of anything? Talents of silver, how many? Measures of wheat? The doors of my storehouses are open.”

The Master smiled, “What would that help and what can ye help? Have I not broken many prison bars before? But now the hour has come — (with an expression of resignation) the word of Isaiah may be fulfilled. But let us be courteous and not forget our host, let us rejoice in what the day has given us.”

Our faces brightened. After all it might have been only a casual remark of no deeper and ominous significance as happens during after dinner

TWENTY-FIRST DAY

conversation, so we made merry again, cracked nuts, broke cake and drank deep from the fluid amber of the old Falernean wine.

TWENTY-FIRST DAY

THE Master is once more the indefatigable preacher. He has spoken three times in the synagogue and given at least half a dozen out-of-door meetings. Besides he has been consulted by more than a hundred of sick people, a weird procession of lunatics, lepers, men smitten with palsy, the blind, the halt, some with withered hands, and those possessed with devils. And the foolish questions they ask him at the end of his talks!

One man from the vineyards wanted to know whose wife a woman, married seven times on earth, would be in heaven. Also whether relationship still held good, so that one could send a mother-in-law to her parents instead of having her pester about in one's own celestial mansion. But I suppose up there we only float about, meet occasionally with new pleasure, as old scores are forgotten. Otherwise what would be the reason of going there?

"Oh, ye of little faith," the Master cried out, "will ye ever believe farther than ye can see? Go back to thy winevat and tread upon what thou understandest."

The Master worked so hard on the last day of our journey no doubt to forget. There seem to be two spirits struggling within him. If one

TWENTY-SECOND DAY

could fathom his thoughts and be of help to him, for even a pauper can sometimes help a king. I looked up the chapter in Isaiah the Master referred to last evening, but could not find anything that would have made the Master's utterance clearer. Well, we will wait and see, for by eventide tomorrow we will be in Jerusalem.

TWENTY-SECOND DAY

THIS was to be supposed the festal day of triumph. Alas, not everything turned out as joyfully and peacefully as expected. When we were nigh Jerusalem, the Master beckoned me aside and gave me the order to go into yonder village, to such and such a field, where two roads meet. There I would find an ass. "Loose him and bring him thither."

"Master, do you mean swipe him," I asked perplexed, "what shall I do when somebody asks 'Why loose ye the colt?'" He ignored my irreverent remark.

"Say the Lord has need of him."

So I set forth on this expedition, followed the given directions and found the ass. Well, it was not a beautiful animal. A veritable ass among asses, a stingily built, undersized creature. I loosened the rope from the tree where the animal had been grazing, and at that very moment the beast bolted away so that the rope was jerked out of my hand. Then began a chase up and down the field. Whenever I thought I could

TWENTY - SECOND DAY

seize it or step upon it, the animal made another dart for liberty. Finally, hot and angry, I got hold again of the rope, pulled the ass towards me, not too gently, wound the rope tight around his neck and belabored its hindpart with a stout stick.

When I had finished with this involuntary exercise, I saw the owner standing before me, eyeing me rather suspiciously.

"The Lord—is—in need of him," I stammered, blushing furiously.

"Ye are sent for him?"

I nodded.

"Well, I agreed to let ye have it, for your entrance procession. Be sure to leave it afterwards at the stable of the tavern on the Southwest corner of the Temple."

Why all this confounded mystery about this abortion of a beast, I mused, as I jogged along the road. "Why do you not move on," I shouted again and again. "You are not Balaam's ass. There is no angel with a fiery sword barring the way." And thus I had to pull and cudgel the quadruped into submission.

When I came to the place where the others waited, they cast some cloth upon the beast and the Master mounted it.

Judas Iscariot, dressed up in yellow specially for the occasion, was furious. "What ever possesses the Master! I bet it is all James' fault who arranged it. Why the Master should make his entrance in a chariot or on a horse, a camel,

TWENTY - SECOND DAY

a dromedary, even a mule, everything would be preferable to this execration. See, it is entirely too small, the feet of the Master almost drag the ground; he should be seated higher than the crowd through which he passes; now he is on the same level with their eyes. And to think that we were at Zaccheus! He would have given us the best stallion in his stable, and mules, saddles, bridles, gay caparisons for all of us. Or even his patronesses in Jerusalem. They are only too willing to minister to his wants. The trouble is he will never ask for anything."

"Why did you not arrange it, are you not the steward?"

"Verily, but James is the manager. There is nothing in the treasury," and he produced an empty money bag, "and I am not allowed to ask for help."

All of which was undeniable. Still, what could we do? Whenever the Master has made up his mind, there is no use of trying to forestall him. He would go ahead anyhow. Even now the procession was on the way.

It was painfully simple. James and John led the animal, or rather dragged it. The animal showed a decided predilection for walking backwards and to indulge in all sorts of antics with its hindlegs. On the Master's side walked Peter and Doubting Thomas. The latter had the intention to trumpet all the way but the Master stopped him as they might think we were giving alms and wished to announce it, as some wicked

TWENTY-SECOND DAY

men do in Jerusalem to make known their benevolence. The other Eight and the seventy "Minors" marched behind us as usual.

Our route led around the Mount of Olives and across the Kidron. We entered Jerusalem by the road near the Pond, and made our way along the so-called Cheesemakers' Valley, straightway to the Temple. The crowd was cold and not large, about two rows deep on every side, increasing, however, steadily as we neared the Temple. The Master looked at nobody, his gaze had that faraway look through half-closed eyes far beyond the seventy-four turrets of David's city.

The entrance had not been announced and many did not know who he was. He had merely come to look round about and see where he would stand the next day. A group of children waving palm leaves and singing a hymn pleased him much and he stepped up to talk to them. There were also quite a number of friends and sympathisers, elders and scribes, and delegations from the Pharisees, Sadducees and Esseneans. As no official meeting had been arranged, it was only a matter of greetings and a ceremonious exchange of courtesies. They told him that Annas and Caiaphas required a sign before they would recognize him. The Master answered roughly, "No sign will be given," and then turned around and said, "When the West wind blows, there will be showers and when the East wind blows there will be dearth and drouth. You

T W E N T Y - S E C O N D D A Y

are aware of that. Well, then, discern the signs of the times the same way as ye discern the face of the sky.”

The highpriests turned away from him, keeping up their proud, dignified deportment, but their faces twitched with hate and contempt. The Master, taking no further notice of them, strolled into the outer court, where they were selling offerings for the Passover. He looked at the transactions going on, listened attentively and watched a dealer asking some exorbitant price from a poor widow. And suddenly he drew out “my” scourge and smote the merchant across the shoulder, shouting, “This is not a den of thieves!” and scattered the stacks of money so that they fell tinkling like a shower of silver to the floor, and then he overthrew the table with one mighty kick. During the next minute, more than a dozen money-changers—slap, slap, slap,—felt the smart of his scourge. He flourished it with amazing rapidity.

He then pulled forth the lambs and kids of the goats, threw open the pens of the young bullocks and upset the seats of the sellers of doves. He shattered the drink offerings, and the wine flowed like a stream of blood from the broken vessels. We simply stood aghast, the wild spectacle took our breath away, but some of the minor disciples began to take part in what threatened to become a battle. Pandemonium reigned, the animals galloped about frightened, ran between some highpriests’ legs, so that their august bodies rolled

TWENTY-SECOND DAY

in the dust. The dealers shouted and gesticulated in a pitiful fashion. Young mothers just risen from childbed raised their arms imploringly to heaven, and the pigeons all bewildered fluttered in crazy fashion about the people's heads, while the populace who had come to buy shouted approval, as he was a friend of the poor and opposed to high prices. The Master's face gleamed with gratification, he wiped the perspiration from his forehead, and then as if nothing happened, quietly put back the scourge and turned to leave.

I wonder why we were not arrested right then and there. But it seemed that the Levites and underpriests did not dare to act without consulting the highest officials. They were afraid of him and feared the multitude, which looked with wonder and approval at his action and took him for a true prophet.

"There will be a record breaking crowd at tomorrow's lectures," Phillip murmured as we made our way unmolested towards Bethany to stay over night at the farmyard of Simon the Leper. The fragrance of blossoms floated on the evening breeze.

"Gee whiz," said Peter, "did he not give it to them?"

"Simply wonderful," chimed in Bartholomew, "he looked like an avenging angel."

"To-night he proved that he could be a ruler of men and king of Palestine," grumbled Judas

TWENTY-THIRD DAY

Iscariot, and his dark eyes flashed, "Will he do it?"

In the evening priests and scribes came to interview him, but he refused to see them. James pleaded, "Master, why not see them? At this occasion thou wouldst be seen under circumstances entirely favorable to thee and unfavorable to the others."

"Nay, nay, I have no time to spare for scribes. Nor care I for distribution of personal news, puffs, endorsement or falsifications, or announcements of any kind."

TWENTY-THIRD DAY

THEY were veritable firebrands, these two speeches. Never have I heard the Master speak with such convincing vehemence, with such subterranean insistence, like a stream of lava breaking its way down the mountain side. His accusations singed and parched. One yearned for an oasis, for a relief from this sin-choked earth. The audience, so closely packed that dozens of people fainted, sat as in a trance with their eyes riveted upon him as upon some supernatural apparition. All his admirers, sympathisers known and unknown, and his women friends were present: Mary the wife of Alpheus, Susanna, Joanna the wife of Herod's steward, and Mary Magdalen with her surreptitious retinue of young maidens. In the gallery I espied Salome with some female attendants.

TWENTY-THIRD DAY

Was ever a woman dressed in that fashion? Half like a fully armed Tritarean, half like a Numidian acrobat. No Daughter of Zion was ever loaded down with so many bracelets, rings, chains, jeweled belts and bands, and metal ornaments on her legs so that it looked as if she wore no clothes at all. What does the Master's voice mean to her hungry looks? A strange liking that of hers, for prophets! Does it warm the coldness of her pervert emotions or is it merely lascivious curiosity that causes a smile like a little snake to wriggle across her painted lips?

In his address he assailed the priesthood for their evil examples of life, and foretold the destruction of Jerusalem, and then departing from the Temple went to an adjoining hill and pointing at the towers and buildings, walls and gates, foretold the day when no stone of the Temple would be left upon another. It was a lurid picture, the sentences were like jewels on fire that one could not touch. Before our eyes the whole city was burning, weird black forms against a reddish sky. The people were awe-struck, the majority felt too overcome to utter words of approval or reproof. It left a burn in the souls of the guilty and stunned the others.

The Egyptian boy came and nestled against me, "Your God must be an awful scolding and wrathful God."

And the multitude as he left the Temple cried, "Hosanna to the Son of David, Blessed is he who cometh in the name of the Lord!" A few ad-

TWENTY-THIRD DAY

mirers spread out their garments before him, waved branches of palm trees and strewed palm leaves in his way, but the Temple guard repressed any serious demonstration.

We, the Twelve, who were supposed to comprehend (with the exceptions of Judas and Bartholomew, for whom the speech seemed too fiery) were all amazed. It had moved us so profoundly that for hours afterwards we gave ourselves up in silence to the overwhelming expression. The Master gained a new presence and deeper significance to us. As we wandered home in the thickening dusk, we could not help of having sad forebodings. If he only had not called the Pharisees vipers, scorpions and snakes, devourers of widows' houses and fakers of long prayers. They will never forgive him. He boxed their ears and spat contemptuously into their faces. He tore off their embroidered robes and showed their foulness beneath. What will they do in return? Surely some danger is way-laying us. The dam might break at any moment and deluge him.

Arrived at our camp at the foot of Mount of Olives, the Master left us for a walk about the mountain. Judas stared after him, then shook his black locks and his eyes were as dark as if one looked into a pit. We did not know that even at that moment the Sanhedrim assembled together in secret and eager consultation at the palace of the Highpriest, so that they might take the Master into custody without offending the populace and kill him.

TWENTY-FOURTH DAY

TWENTY-FOURTH DAY

No serious woe has as yet befallen us. We went to town in pairs and by threes to avoid drawing unnecessary attention and returned the same way late in the afternoon. I am convinced there will be no arrest in the Temple or in the streets of Jerusalem. But of course they could easily follow us as we make no secrecy of our camping place. The Master, unafraid, with firm steps, calm and gentle as ever, wends his way through the groups of loiterers and holiday visitors, a crowd that seems strangely silent and dull. Only now and then a respectable citizen nudges his wife with the elbow, "That is Jesus over there, the prophet from Galilee."

In the afternoon the Temple gates were closed to us, due more to the Passover ceremonies than any open enmity to him. The votaries standing in rows and busy with killing Paschal lambs, handed pieces of meat to the priest while the Levites shouted the Hallel. I never understood all this killing of innocent animals, the sprinkling of blood upon the altars, making the Temple look like a slaughter-house. If people tried to lead a purer life, atonements of this kind would be deemed futile. And if they prefer to wallow in excess abomination, what can this flow of blood avail? The stench of blood is sickening and to judge from the number of sacrifices made this must be, verily, a sinful community. I believe

TWENTY-FOURTH DAY

the Master wishes to introduce a simpler, less sanguinary method at to-morrow's Passover's meal. It would be a blessing to wipe away these ceremonies of superstition and ignorance, fostered by the priesthood with zealous care, so that they may lead their idle life of exhortation and excess.

There is some nasty work done somewhere. It has forced the Master to change his program. Instead of giving regular sermons he had to substitute talks, permitting debates. From the very start he was continually interrupted, plied with all sorts of questions that try to trap him and tangle him in his talk to make some statement that might be taken for blasphemy or offend the authorities. He could not avoid answering, but he managed it with great skill and tact, steering his ship of eloquence through all obstacles. And after he had explained his doctrine for hours and hours a delegation of would-be disciples came with an insolent petition begging him to tell things more plainly and to declare the meaning of some parables unto them. It would be exceedingly annoying, if it were not so ridiculous.

This was his last day of preaching in Jerusalem and our lecturing campaign has therewith come to an end. What will the next step be? Will the moment come when he, a ruler among men, will don purple and sway a sceptre over multitudes, commanding them to accept his life of clearer vision and fraternal equity, or will he leave it to individual souls to resurrect them-

TWENTY-FIFTH DAY

selves and to strive for that state of perfection which is possible only in another world? The coming hours will tell.

TWENTY-FIFTH DAY

WE were told to go one by one to different street corners in Jerusalem, where each would be met by a servant carrying a water jug which would lead us to the house chosen by the Master for the Passover celebration. The dinner was a simple one, consisting only of lamb stew, bitter herbs, unleavened bread and wine, and nobody was present but the Master and we disciples. The secrecy was maintained solely to avoid any outside interruption, and perhaps also to lend it a special touch of mystery and somnolence, an atmosphere which the Master likes to produce whenever the occasion demanded.

The Master surely has staunch friends, as shown by the invisible host who threw open his house and furnished the food to a party to which he was not admitted. We came as appointed and sat down at a table in a large, bare room with curtained windows. The Master entered with a basin and a sponge and insisted on washing our feet. No matter how much we objected we had to submit to this extraordinary performance. Peter refused to the very last; he urged that his feet were too dirty, there was tar on them, and so on, but the Master silenced him with "Either be washed or have no part in this meeting." He

TWENTY-FIFTH DAY

then explained why he did it, he was their Master and yet washed their feet as an example of humility, so that we would do to our inferiors as he had done to us. Whereupon he brought in the food. None of us ate or drank heartily. We were all too excited. We knew we had come to hear of something of more import than the customary reading of the "coming out of Egypt."

The conversation lagged, as we expected the Master to speak. Among other admonitions and forebodings of more or less import, he expressed the hope that in case he, the shepherd, would be called away, as he was almost sure he would be, and we would be scattered abroad like lost sheep, that we would know what to do. "For ye shall all be in ill repute because of me this night."

Peter answered for all of us, although he thought only of himself. "We do not care what will befall us. We are concerned only about thee."

The Master then introduced a simpler ceremony for the remission of sins which he wished us to put into practice. He broke one of the thin, flat loaves and handed us each a piece, saying, "Take, eat, this is my body," and then he seized a wine cup, took a sip and had it passed around, saying, "Drink, ye all, of it. For this is my blood," and then explained that the bread and wine represented his bodily sufferings here on earth, and that they should be offered to those who believed that he had come to redeem sin by personal sacrifice and that their trespasses would

TWENTY-FIFTH DAY

be forgiven thereby. And the ceremony would consist only of offering to the repentant a bit of showbread and a drop of show-wine accompanied with some appropriate wording.

We approved of this innovation, praised it as beautiful, yet were doubtful whether the coarse and crude would be satisfied, and not rather continue to butcher and play with blood. We then sang a hymn, and left together—for now it was dark—for a grove of old, twisted and furrowed olive trees called Gethsemane, near our Mount of Olive camp.

There was a cold, green afterglow in the Western sky. The Master seemed deeply depressed when we arrived; he said unto us, "Tarry ye here, while I take a climb to the top of the mountain." From the top he could see the lights of Jerusalem twinkling placidly one above the other up the steep hillside houses, while mountains and hills, dark, clean-cut pinnacles and flattened peaks, rolled away in every direction. To the South lay the wide, gray trench of the Jordan Valley, wherein the river marked a vague, serpentine line of lighter gray, and far away in the South there was a shimmer as of the ocean, the waters of the Dead Sea.

Waiting, our eyes grew heavy, and we lay down to sleep. Suddenly aroused by a tumult of voices, a flare of torchlights greeted our opening eyes. I saw a band of men and a troop of soldiers, fully weaponed, and amidst tufts of flame and weird shadows the Master standing

TWENTY-FIFTH DAY

before them. I also caught a glimpse of Judas, but he slunk away and I saw no more of him.

I hastened to the Master and heard him say, "Yes, I am Jesus of Nazareth. But why do ye come out, as against a thief, with lances and swords to take me?" And as he offered no resistance, they laid hold of him.

At that moment Peter came rushing to the scene, wrenched a sword from a soldier's hand and aimed a fearful blow at one of the Levite's head and almost cut off his right ear.

The soldiers turned to attack us. But the Master staid them, "Have you not told that it is me ye seek? Let these therefore go their way. Peter, put up they sword and let me administer to the wounded man," and therewith bandaged the Levite's ear.

Even the soldiers wondered at the calmness and kindness of this man and fell back, but when he had administered to the wound, the officer of the band himself took the Master, bound him and led him away. Most of the disciples—to our great shame I must confess this—had fled, or stood in the distance as if struck dumb and motionless. All had happened so quickly, like the dismal vision of a dream. I found myself standing as if rooted in the ground, while my nails had dug deep into my palms out of sheer despair over my helplessness.

We drifted together again, but none spoke. The full moon came out ominously large and yellow in a strip of amethyst sky between the

TWENTY-FIFTH DAY

straight lines of a cloud and a level mountain summit. And everyone obeying his own impulse, made his way to town to the gates of the high-priest's palace. And there we stood, only Peter had the courage to enter the courtyard, and he later reported to us what he had witnessed. The council sat for hours seeking false witness against the Master, but it was difficult to produce any offence serious enough to put him to death. They tried to examine him, and as he held his peace, smote him with the palm of their hands, and all he would say was that he had said nothing in secret but had always spoken openly to the world. Then someone struck on the lucky idea to ask him whether he was the expected Messiah, the son of God. And he answered proudly, "Ye say what I am."

"And they were jubilant and said, "What do we need further? This is blasphemy and treason combined, he will rise in a revolt against Priesthood and State and aspire to be king of Palestine. The whole council has heard it of his own mouth."

Will the governor find him guilty? that weighed heavily on our mind. Peter, however, had some personal grievance; he wept and assailed himself for disloyalty, as he has denied the Master three times. He had sat down at the open fire to warm himself and the gatekeeper, a damsel of the household, soldiers and priests, had plied with the question, "Are you not one of his gang?" to which he lied, "No, I am not,

TWENTY-SIXTH DAY

I never heard of such a man; I do not know what you are talking about," and each time by some coincidence a cock crowed.

There seemed to me nothing humiliating or wrong about that, for if he had said who he was, they would have given him a good beating and thrown him out on the street. What was worthy of scalding tears was our incompetence. We had no leader among us who could tell us what to do, and thus we tossed about sleepless all night, without coming to any resolution. We were as yet dependent on the Master and did not know how to act without his bidding.

TWENTY-SIXTH DAY

It was a mob crowd, rough garbed and unkempt, swarthy and showing its teeth, that had taken possession of the square before Pontius Pilate's palace. There was a great deal of laughter, ribald jest and disorder on every hand. Without exception they seemed to be possessed by a riotous spirit. They were ready to fight at the slightest provocation. The Pharisee party had done its dirty underground work. Their leaders had been busy for days past of apparent quiet to inveigle the crowd by denouncing and ridiculing the Master, and now the very ground on which we stood seemed to be undermined with the subterranean work of moles. Bribed men, some markedly foreign in appearance, had been

TWENTY-SIXTH DAY

distributed among the crowd, and they never ceased of murmuring denunciations into the ears of those around them: "What do we want with this false prophet from Galilee!" "Would you allow a bastard from a fishing valley teach your wives and children?" "He is a blasphemer that keeps neither Sabbath nor fasts." "A pauper that is prying on the weakness of others!" "Where is this king in rags? this wine-bibbing Messiah?"

Like the fiery sparks of burning bush threatening to set a whole field aflame these accusations fell upon the ears of the impatient crowd, which from time to time burst out into yelps, and moved about frantically as if possessed by evil spirits. I thought with bitterness and reproach at my heart that we seventy-two in similar manner could have gained control over this seething mass of humanity, but we had failed to organize and now it was too late. Whenever we uttered a word in defence, blows rained upon us, and we were poked, battered and flung about. The sun had scarcely risen over the domed housetops, but the Master had already been brought by the accusing highpriests before Pilate in the hall of Judgment.

What went on in there must be left to future historians as the guards had refused to admit anyone who had no business within. No doubt the highpriests accused him of treason and offered the Master as a sin-offering for the entire populace. But Pilate, who was no Jew, and

TWENTY-SIXTH DAY

had no understanding for hairsplitting religious differences, could find no fault in him. At least this was to be surmised, as he came forth unto the balcony with the Master bound and surrounded by soldiers. After a glance of apprehension over the mob he addressed them. With difficulty his voice rose above the turmoil, for at sight of the cause of all this hatred, the agitation became general, and the very pavement rocked to the tumult of stamping feet, of yells and imprecations. But finally his voice was heard announcing that as Jesus was a native of Galilee, he would ask Herod, the Tetrarch of Galilee (who at the moment was a guest of the town), to sit judgment over him,—that he had sent a messenger—and that the Tetrarch was already on the way—"Clear the space!" he commanded to the soldiery below.

The crowd grumbled. As time crept onward the excitement grew, the tension increased. Herod in splendid array came haughtily riding along accompanied by weapon bearers and horsemen armed to the teeth. He yawned and threw a glance of utter disdain at the rabble. To be disturbed in his morning slumber for them. Never have I seen a face more stoically vicious; in every line and hollow of his wrinkled face seemed to lurk some perverse desire. His eyes sparkled with an unholy fire, and his mouth, hidden by a false beard, resembled a black hole that would emit naught but venom. He entered the palace and most likely sat down with Pilate to a

TWENTY-SIXTH DAY

sumptuous repast, as it took him a long time to decide that the case was out of his jurisdiction.

When Pilate came out to tell this, the crowd jeered insultingly and bellowed defiance at him. Noisy and threatening from the very start, this mob, goaded on by the loud shouts of Pharisean partisans, displayed a stubborn rage and was ready for shows of immediate violence. They turned into rioters, bent on breaking through the cordon of guards and rushing in a body against the palace gates. The soldiers unsheathed their swords.

Pilate looked alarmed. Further delay might become harmful to himself. He made one more desperate attempt to save the Master. He shouted at the top of his voice, "You all know that I have established the custom to release unto you one criminal at the Passover. Here is Barrabas the highway robber and here is Jesus, your prophet from Nazareth. Whom will you have that I release unto you?"

And they shouted at the top of their voices "Barrabas, Barrabas!" and when he pointed towards the Master as if asking the question what shall I do with him, they roared "Crucify him, nail him up with the others."

Then Pilate who knew the value of pantomime in a public demonstration, had a silver basin of water brought to him, and he washed his hands in sight of the public and slowly dried them on an embroidered towel. The symbol was unmistak-

TWENTY-SIXTH DAY

able. He had shifted all responsibility upon the Jewish people.

And a great shout of hatred and triumph rose. "Away with him, away with him, crucify him; we have no king but Ceasar." So they yelped and snarled as they surged about the wide square, carrying everybody before them in their aimless frenzy, until the soldiery with drawn swords began to clear the place. Then reports came that the crucifixions would take place in the afternoon, and that the Master had been turned over to the official executioners and that they who scourged him had also cruelly mocked him, crowning him with a wreath of thorns, arraying him in an old purple gown of Pilate's, and pressing a sceptre in his hand, and then had bowed in mock courtesy before him shouting "Hail, king of the Jews."

"Oh, thou man of sorrows, thou God self-banished," I sobbed as I, utterly dejected and worn out, walked as in a daze through the crooked streets. Not knowing where to go to or what to do, I entered a tavern in an unfrequented place just to sit down and collect my thought.

There I ran into a drunkard, hiccoughing, his beard bejewelled with wine drops. He was railing about the Master. "Serves him right.—hic—What does he come down here for? We are not taken in so easily—hic—To the cross with him!"

"I understand," I burst forth, "that the like of you can make nothing of his words; but, drunken

TWENTY-SIXTH DAY

wretch, have you neither any sympathy for a man who heals the sick?"

"Do we need a Galilean for that? Have we not the baths at Bethesda? There is room enough for all the sick. At certain seasons the water is troubled by some—hic—angel, and everybody steps in and goes away cured. Capernaum cannot teach Jerusalem anything. To the cross with him."

"You will suffer eternal damnation for these words."

"Perhaps yes, perhaps not, tut tut, stranger, don't be so fierce—hic—Are you also one of these fishers of—hic—men? Better hide or they'll nip you." And then hiccoughing and bawling in a singing voice, "Perhaps yes, and perhaps not. To the cross with him," he staggered into the street.

I turned in disgust and looked for a quiet corner. And there I saw a weird picture. There a man sat, with his head thrown sideways on the tabletop, the right arm in a gesture of despair circling around it, while silver pieces lay scattered all about him. It was Judas Iscariot. I stepped to a corner of the table and looked at him with deep compassion. He roused himself and stared at me as at an apparition.

"Judas, why did you do it? And you took money for it," I added with contempt.

"Ah, what do I care about the money. I am not as guilty as you think. I hoped to bring things to an issue. I thought he could be roused

TWENTY-SIXTH DAY

to action, that he would be sublime again as on the day when he drove the vendors out of the temple; that he would make another speech that would enflame the entire population, that they would arm themselves for him, and that he would bear down all opponents like reeds."

"And you be Master of the Stables for the new king of Palestine! Was it not your own ambition that prompted you?"

"Far be it from me to defend myself. What is the difference, as it all has come to such a horrible end! But honestly I thought that a throne was awaiting him. Did he not say he could command legions of angels? He himself came to a decision only at the last moment."

"Yes I believe that two spirits lay in strife within his soul all the time, since we left Mount Tabor. That is why he grew so taciturn and absorbed in thought. Yet it was for him to decide. We promised to obey his word."

"Even unto his death?"

I remained silent.

"I failed because I was too worldly to comprehend the greatest sacrifice, and now will be doomed forever to remorse. Yes, I begin to see. I am fit for naught but to dangle from a forked branch of a sycamore and to have the hawks pick out the eyes that could not see the light."

"I would not take it so to heart, Judas. After all you tried to do something, even if it was wrong. We others did nothing, and—you did not really betray him. He was daily in the

TWENTY-SIXTH DAY

Temple and they did not take him. And we made no secrets of our whereabouts. They would have found us just as readily without your help, and they came to you, did they not?"

"No, no, I deliberately went to them, I had only that one idea in my mind. Make the Master act. As if he needed me for that!" and he hid his face in his crossed arms shoved far out upon the table top.

We sat there all the afternoon, silent, as each knew the thought that was in the other's heart. Not to attract any undue attention I put up the coins in stacks, poured out the contents of the wine jug which we had hardly touched and fetched another. I did not want to think of what was going on somewhere outside. I prayed that time would stand still altogether, or that the whole day and all future days would thunder like an avalanche into the abyss of the past.

Now and then Judas would startle up and assail himself in furious self-accusations. Suddenly it grew uncommonly dark. A storm of unusual vehemence seemed to have broken loose over the city. The earth seemed to shiver and shift.

Judas rose, shook his heavy head of hair, gazed wildly about and asked in a hoarse voice "Have you any money? Give me what is missing. I will fling it back into the face of those murderers."

I did not see much use in this but obeyed his sinister mood. He grabbed the money, stood for

TWENTY-SEVENTH DAY

a moment in deep thought and then with a sudden resolution darted away into the pelting rain.

The hours wearily crawled on. I still sat there for a long time. Several times I wanted to drag myself outdoors. But what should I do in the darkness that was not half deep as the darkness within me. I could bring no light.

TWENTY-SEVENTH DAY

I FAIN recall where and how I spent the night. When I awoke to reality the stars were still bright and I ascending the hill of execution. There loomed the three crosses, haggard, scarcely distinguishable forms; but what was that! Or did my eyes deceive me! The middle one had no occupant. I rushed to the level top. True enough, the Master had vanished. There stood the *crux* (the pole), with the pitiful small seat and the ominous hook to which the *patibulum* (the crossbeam), with a big screw-eye in the middle, is hoisted up with the victim. The ropes and crossbeam were still lying on the ground. I picked up one of the huge nails as a keepsake, I believe it was the one that had penetrated the right hand. The two murderers, Dysmas and Stegas, still hung on their crosses, rigid and angular like to contorted figures carved in wood. What had happened to the Master's body? I looked about in vain for an answer. The sky was still and solemn, the city quiet, and a bird sang somewhere on the slope of hill.

TWENTY - SEVENTH DAY

I was lost in meditation, when a hand touched me. The young Egyptian stood before me. He had seen it all. "Ah, master Lebbeus, it was horrible. All the way they jeered at him, threw stones and spit at him. And the cross beam lay so heavily on his shoulder that it scrawned his neck forward, and then carrying the arms extended this way—it was a heartrending sight. The Master stumbled many times. They carried a sign with the inscription "Jesus king of the Jews" right before him. Did he really want to become king—I do not understand such things. Up here the soldiers formed a square around the three and their executioners. A few moments later we saw the three hoisted up. Ah, I wept so. Not even when the great Tullus was killed in the arena at Alexandria by a lion, were my cheeks more wet."

"My poor child, there will be much more weeping about this. But tell me more. Did the Master speak?" Yes, at the very beginning he said something like, "Forgive them all, they know what they are up to!" And a little later he asked for something to drink and they dipped a twig of hyssop in some medicated wine and held it up to him on a reed."

"Did he suffer much, did he moan?"

"No, master Lebbeus, he acted like a gladiator, exceedingly brave and haughty, *morituri te salutant*; not a sound escaped him. Oh, yes, much later he just made one awful scream, I did not understand what he tried to say. The guard

TWENTY-SEVENTH DAY

in the meantime had been carousing and casting dice for his garments, now one of them pierced the Master's armpit. They do that I was told to relieve the strain of the weight forwards. Not much blood flowed, just a few drops; the wound clogged up again. And before I forget, let me tell how the other two men quarrelled, exactly like two old women. A strange place for that was it not? The one, here to the right, his face contorted, made ghastly fun of the Master, saying, 'If you are the son of God, why don't you help yourself and us too?' And the other one said, 'We deserve our punishment, but this man has done nothing amiss,' and then the Master said 'Verily, I heard it distinctly, I say unto thee, to-day—shalt thou be with me in paradise.'"

"Did he really say that, to-day—which was last night?" and I was lost in wonder.

"The crowd did not behave so badly. Of course, they mocked him and wagged their heads, and what astonished me most, some of the priests passed and also railed at him."

"And what happened then? Did you stay here all the time?"

The boy nodded, "The surest thing you know. Then the storm came. It poured, and the people all ran down the hill. Only the guard stayed. And then you know, Arimathea had gotten a permit from Pilate to bury him. Peter was here too, all the time carrying a big pair of iron pincers under his cloak and he had hidden a stretcher in one of the excavations. He always

TWENTY-SEVENTH DAY

thinks of everything. Then the storm arose and the world seemed to come to an end. The earth rocked to and fro. It was so dark that I could not see the crosses from where I stood. The soldiers got frightened and probably were glad to make their escape. They forgot to break the Master's legs. It must have been at that time they took him down. For I also ran for shelter."

"Only six or eight hours on the cross! Then there is a possibility that he is still alive. But where could they have taken him?"

The boy pointed towards the South. "Arima-thea has a cave vault in the valley!"

"Let us go, my child," I said.

Before we descended I threw a glance at the three towers protecting the magnificent palace that Herod the Great has built and which at this moment was occupied by Herodes Antipatros, his bastard son from a Samaritan concubine, and those two monstrous women of his, Herodias and Salome. Did she watch the crucifixion from the ramparts, smile in emotional anguish, or did she try to express in dancelike pantomime the acrid pangs of death! The Master was right in refusing such a power that degenerates, that stifles and dwarfs all decency towards one's fellowmen.

We descended into a weird world of shadowy forms and faint lights. Around us the lilies were wet with dew, and in the deep grasses lay the thick bloom of trees. Before us spread a plain, dim, silent, forsaken, a mysterious haze which floated over the white bed of a brook we had to

TWENTY-SEVENTH DAY

pass, and which clung to the clusters of cypress trees that looked as nebulous as the rest of the ghostly scene. As we approached the cave vaults, a huge perpendicular wall, I saw three women with hands folded in their laps, sitting on stones. They were wrapped in black and purple, with bare feet, their heads covered, each sat alone in profound silence, motionless like statues. Their figures formed a diagonal line against the furrowed and scarred rock wall, like three dark accents of sorrow in a realm of rugged desolation, with the keen wind of the morning blowing a red dawn lengthway through the valley to the door of the sepulchre. They were the three Marys, the wife of Alpheus, Mary Magdalen and the mother of Jesus, who had put on fresh white garments as she proudly started on the long way from Nazareth to witness her son's lecturing triumphs in Jerusalem. Little had the matron thought that she would sit so soon in sackcloth and ashes before a tomb and mutter a mournful ditty. That dawn I shall remember until the very end of my days.

Nicodemus, known for his habit of calling on his friends very late at night, appeared at this moment with a jar of myrrh and aloe ointment, so big that he could hardly carry it. Also other nebulous figures of disciples and devotees suddenly loomed up in the distance.

"Is the Master here?" we all asked.

Mary Magdalen wearily turned her head, some drapery did fall, and her rebellious hair, all warm

TWENTY-SEVENTH DAY

and fragrant, fell ruddy to her feet: "I can not tell you, when they will bring the beloved or why he is so late. Although we have naught to give him save what we have of tears, we assembled here after the blackness of the storm and prepared the linen—we have brought a regular undertaker's kit with us—also spices and ointments. The night was long to wait. It is a feast that leaves no laughter."

"May this be the resurrection, the great mystery, some unexplained catastrophe, the lost link of a story never to be fully told?" I asked myself in trepidation.

"They must have taken him somewhere," practical Nicodemus observed. "Was he perhaps still alive when they took him from the cross, and now are hiding him somewhere out of all harm's way?"

Then the night watch of the district, a troop of soldiers came to investigate whether Christ was duly buried. When they saw the sepulchre empty they were much amazed and worried. Simpletons, they did not anticipate that on their way back to town they would be met by some elders, who would give them large money to say to everybody, even to Pilate, that his disciples had come by night and stolen the body. And later in the day they rolled large stones before the entrance of the empty grave and set out a special watchman to make passer-bys believe that the body lay at rest within.

We, the friends of the Master, made up our

TWENTY-EIGHTH DAY

minds that whether he was dead or alive, his whereabouts had to be found out at once, and thus dispersed to scour the city and its vicinity in all directions.

TWENTY-EIGHTH DAY

WE were indeed like lambs who had lost their shepherd, like young birds cast out of their nests. All of yesterday we walked in ellipses, from town to the vault, to the Mount of Olives and then back again to town. We called on Simon and Lazarus, on Alpheus, at Joseph's home and all his other sympathizers. Not a trace of the Master, or of Peter, James, Andrews and Joseph either. I met nearly all the other disciples, woebegone and out of gear. When we met, we questioned each other about the one important news, and then parted anew.

I heard that Claudia Procula, Pilate's wife, had intervened for the Master's life and that a dream of hers was the cause of the leniency and hesitancy the governor displayed in public. What does it matter as she did not prevent sentence! I was also told that the curtain of the Holy of Holies was rent in twain by the earthquake. For my part the whole Temple could fall asunder and crumble into powder and dust. Even the report that Judas had committed suicide on Mount Lebanon failed to make an impression upon me.

Bartholomew came to the conclusion that he was too old to run about, so he went to the Jacob

TWENTY-NINTH DAY

Inn to mourn in silence until the arrival of gladder tidings. Andrew said he would tramp homewards, as he did not see any further use of staying.

“Yes,” I mused (we were seated in a kitchen where “sea food” was daintily served), “He should have stayed in Galilee. There he was known and worshipped. We fishermen and the husbandmen in the fields, the shepherds on the green hillsides, the children in the market places of our smaller villages, they could have made life a perfect joy to him. There he could have walked beside the peaceful lake banks, delivered his message, healed the sick, but in this place of bitter interests, of greed and graft, of shallow curiosity and clashing prejudices, it had to come to a dismal end.”

“You forget that his mission was to conquer the world; to be more to life than it was to him,” uttered Mattheus who had joined us with great intensity.

“In this fashion? Did he do it?”

“Then we must do it,” said Mattheus, and rose to his full height and waved his arms in the air in an exalted manner.

TWENTY-NINTH DAY

THE weary chase continues. I am famished and weary of foot. But I cannot rest until I have seen him once more.

It sometimes seems as if these twenty-nine

THIRTIETH DAY

days had only been a dream. But no, it was too real to be merely a vision. I see him in a hundred pictures; walking along the road like a flame; sitting on some rock before a lecture and dangling the feet; swimming through the Jordan; Peter cutting his hair; chasing the vendors from the Temple; standing defiant on Pilate's balcony. They must have been real.

Then Mattheus came. It was late in the evening. "Somebody asserts that he has been seen at Lake Galilee."

"Oh, that is too far. How could he get there?" I exclaimed, "remember that he has holes in his feet as large as a coin."

"Also Mary Magdalen claims that he has appeared to her, but I put no trust in women of that kind. But someone said that he had a sympathiser, a very poor man in Emmaus. There may be some truth in it. They may have taken him there."

"Let us go. How far is it?"

"About three score furlongs northwest." I hired some mules, spent my money to the last silver piece and took them all along, Mattheus, his brother James, Simon, Phillip and Doubting Thomas. And the rapid patter of hoofs sounded though the night.

THIRTIETH DAY

WE discovered the place as if by instinct early in the morning. There stood the familiar figures

THIRTIETH DAY

of James, John, Andrew and Arimathea around a coal fire, on which some carp was broiling. We greeted them with a "Peace be unto ye," and conversed in a hushed voice with the gesticulations of sorrow and despair.

This little pasture land between two treeless hills, seemed to be the end of the world. Everything seemed undersized, pigmean, like a world of toys, all cluttered up and meaningless; this one-story house of mud, sun-dried, with beehives plastered on its walls, and a dovecote, some stone jars, balancing on the grass-covered roof. A few brown goats stood on their hind legs to browse the asphodels on the latticed porch, where wash was flapping in the wind and grain was spread for drying. A white wooden bridge crossed a little brook almost overgrown with ragged clumps of reeds and watercresses. A pallid sunlight heightened every touch of ugliness and desolation.

It was as if I had been there before, I know not when or how, but somehow it impressed me like a confused memory or a dim-remembered dream of some former life, as if I were standing outside this scene of frail sunlight, suspended into the air as it were, in a blaze of sunlight with gaps and holes for shadows, blotted out and unaccounted for.

And in the garden, on the ground amidst flowers, creeping vines, winter fruit and heaps of fodder and manure, the hum of bees and pigeons fluttering about, lay the Master. He lay propped

THIRTIETH DAY

up to a seating position all wrapped in white linen, so that his mutilated hands and feet were not visible. His bandaged hands rested in his lap under the cover. His hair was all matted and frowzed, and his face had a violet hue and was all sunk in. With closed eyes and clots of blood in the corners of the mouth, he smiled vaguely, like a person drowned. The sufferings had changed his whole face, as if the features had been thrown about like rocks in some volcanic eruption, in a futile struggle of will against intolerable physical pain, and now had calmed down again without being able to resume their former harmony of proportions.

And the Master opened his eyes. The sunlight played in greenish tints on his forehead. And he said: "Give me something to eat; give me *binni*, broiled *binni* (i. e. carp). And we brought, walking on tip toe, honey and milk; dried locusts and broiled carp, and placed them in easy reach on a little tabaret. And Thomas blew once more his trumpet and the Master muttered once more, "Come and dine." But he could partake of nothing. His eyes glanced wearily about, recognizing us one after the other.

"You love me?" and he tried to smile.

And we replied in unison "Thou knowest that we love thee."

And he murmured "My poor little sheep, my poor little asses!" and then his head dropped on his chest. He was dead.

Even he could not come back. But he was

THIRTIETH DAY

still in our midst and will be with us, who have seen him, as long as we live! as he will be in the minds of many others, innumerable as the twisted little shells on the shores of Lake Galilee, ever increasing in number, who have not seen him and yet believe.

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